LETTERS FROM EUROPE HAYE-CHISORA DELIVERS ACTION, QUESTIONS

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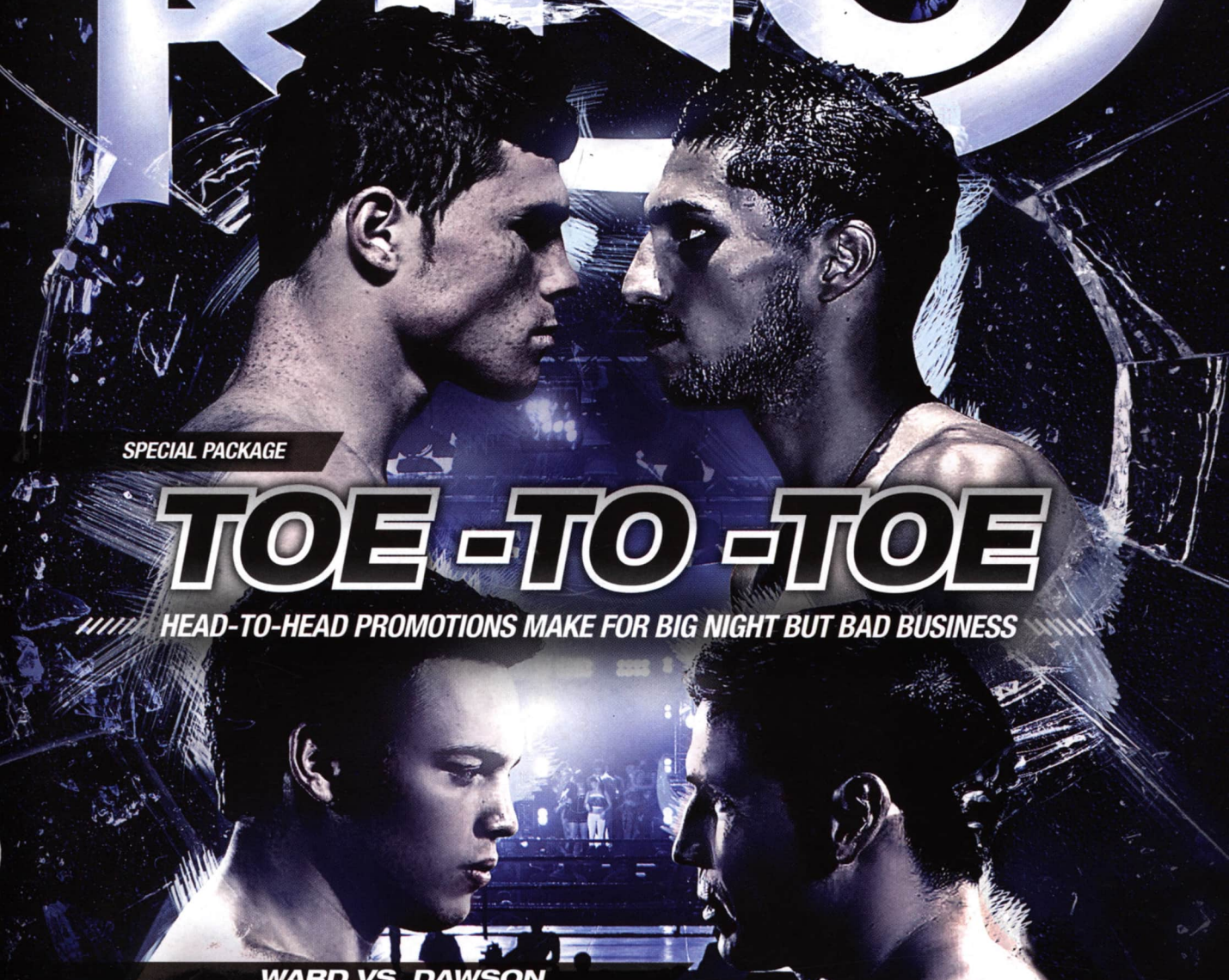

SPECIAL PACKAGE

TOE-TO-TOE

HEAD-TO-HEAD PROMOTIONS MAKE FOR BIG NIGHT BUT BAD BUSINESS

WARD VS. DAWSON

PURISTS' DREAM OR CURE FOR INSOMNIA?

STAR

OSLEY

Q&A WITH HBO'S KEN HERSHMAN

BOXING BOSS INSISTS THE SPORT IS HEALTHY

OCTOBER 2012

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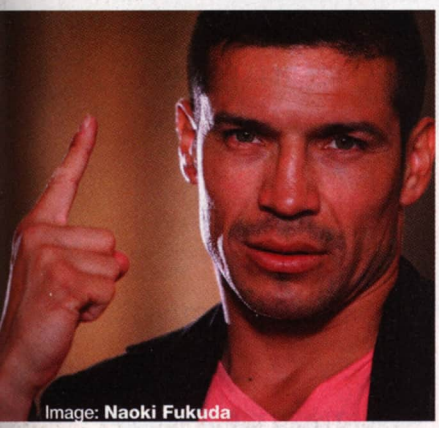
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THOSE WHO FAIL DRUG TESTS ARE OUT

By **Michael Rosenthal**

The recent spate of failed drug tests has underscored an obvious — and troubling — problem in boxing.

As a result, THE RING Editorial Board decided in July that it was time to make a strong statement: Any rated fighter who tests positive for a banned substance will immediately be removed from the magazine's ratings.

That fighter would be reinstated if the testing agency reverses its decision. And he will be allowed to earn his way back into the ratings after any suspension.

(See the policy on Page 34.)

The implementation of the new policy was prompted by three failed drug tests within a span of several months — by Andre Berto, Lamont Peterson and Antonio Tarver, three high-profile figures in the sport.

Berto was unable to face Victor Ortiz in their much-anticipated rematch after he tested positive for the steroid norandrosterone. Peterson's rematch with Amir Khan was scuttled after synthetic testosterone was found in his system.

And Antonio Tarver was suspended for a year after he tested posititive for the steroid drostanolone after he drew with Lateef Kayode. Tarver remained in the ratings pending the testing results of his "B" sample.

The one-two-three combination was more devastating that any flurry of punches thrown by an over-the-weight Adrien Broner.

Why is this so important?

One, boxers risk their lives every time they step through the ropes. No fighter should have an unfair physical advantage over another.

Two, using banned performance-enhancing drugs is cheating. The opponent and fans — especially those who pay hefty fees to watch fights live or on pay-per-view — have the right to expect an even playing field.

And, three, a sport that constantly struggles to maintain an acceptable image, doesn't need a rash of failed drug tests. It's all we can do to survive corruption and horrible decisions.

THE RING Editorial Board doesn't expect the new policy to change an underground culture of cheating, which will continue to thrive as long as boxers and other athletes believe they can get away with it.

But if we're able to send the message that banned substances are unacceptable to responsible parties in the sport, perhaps one or two boxers will think twice before taking them.

In other words, we felt that we had to do something. ■

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David Haye was a man on a mission during his fifth-round knockout victory over **Dereck Chisora** on July 14 in London. Image: **Leon Neal-AFP-Getty Images**

Nonito Donaire had difficulty hitting elusive **Jeffrey Mathebula** cleanly but did damage when he was successful July 7 in Carson, Calif. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

NO DEATH KNELL

After witnessing back-to-back upsets of rising stars Amir Khan and Victor Ortiz, who were on their way to the elite level, it got me thinking about the significance of a loss and how it should be treated. In almost every sport, losing is just part of the game. Tennis is an individual sport as well but no player is dismissed after a loss. In boxing, one loss can ruin a fighter's career. Khan is the perfect example of why a loss should not be considered the end for a fighter. Fans should appreciate boxers who fight all-comers and are willing to put their records on the line, as Khan has done. Promoters are the ones known to kick fighters to the curb; let us fans not do the same.

Lorenzo Sison
Hampton, Va.

NO *ALI*?

With all due respect to RING Magazine, how can you possibly leave the Michael Mann-directed epic boxing movie *Ali* off your "Top 10 Boxing Movies of All-Time" list? Will Smith was brilliant playing Muhammad Ali. Smith even received an Oscar nomination for Best Actor. And critically acclaimed actor Jon Voight earned a nomination for playing the always-animated Howard Cosell. Jamie Foxx also was a treat to watch. I agree with the majority of your list, but to put *Fat City* and *The Champ* over *Ali* just doesn't seem right. *Million Dollar Baby* also was deserving of the Top 10. However, RING got the top two boxing movies absolutely correct. *Raging Bull* and *Rocky* are not only boxing classics, but classic movies.

Stephen Donatelli,
Verona, Pa.

KHAN LIKE KLITSCHKO?

The situation Amir Khan is in after his knockout loss to Danny Garcia reminds me of Wladimir Klitschko after his loss to Lamon Brewster. In my opinion, Khan is more talented than Garcia but his willingness to engage, put on a show and fire on all cylinders is hurting him, much as it did Klitschko. Carl Froch's opinion that Khan should retire is Grade "A" B.S. He's only 25 and he has the desire, skills and determination to build himself back from this. But where should he go from here? I thought the morning before the RING article regarding Khan possibly leaving trainer Freddie Roach that a change may be needed for him in that regard. He needs someone who could tighten up his defense and iron out those flaws in his technique, possibly Floyd Mayweather Sr. or Manny Steward.

Kieran Dale
England

PROTECTED?

Thanks for the article on headgear by fight doctor Margaret Goodman (August 2012). Two additional comments might be in order. 1. Headgear prevents cuts and will likely continue to be used in training for lucrative professional bouts; 2. Wearing headgear increases the collision cross-section for the target head. Some punches that might miss a bare head will land on one "protected" by headgear. The larger the target, the more hits. Granted, such blows are glancing, but these days we recognize that even light blows can accumulate to yield brain damage.

Alfred Holtzer
Dept. of Chemistry
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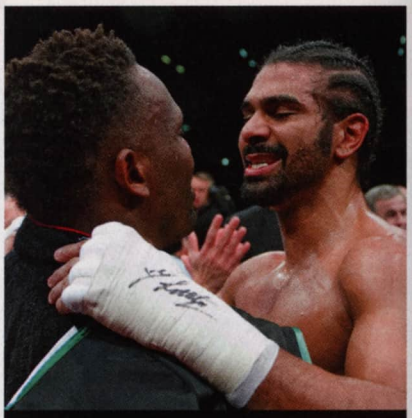

David Haye and **Dereck Chisora** were friendly after four-plus rounds of drama. Image: Image: **Leon Neal-AFP-Getty Images**

DRAMATIC NIGHT

I was one of the 30,000 fans in the rain cheering on David Haye and Dereck Chisora at Upton Park (in London) and boy, they delivered. The atmosphere was amazing and Haye delivered like he always does against fighters under 6-foot-6. I would love ... to see Haye in with Tomasz Adamek, Eddie Chambers or Chris Arreola next but I believe that was his last outing. And what a bang it was! I raced back from London (three-hour drive) to see Amir Khan vs. Danny Garcia to be left shocked. Fair play to Garcia. He has joined the elite and has my respect now. What next for the Bolton lad? I have two scenarios: 1. He takes a few fights in England to get his confidence back, possibly at welterweight; 2. He fights Victor Ortiz. Both fighters are coming off a shock loss. Why not match them?

Dave Lane
England

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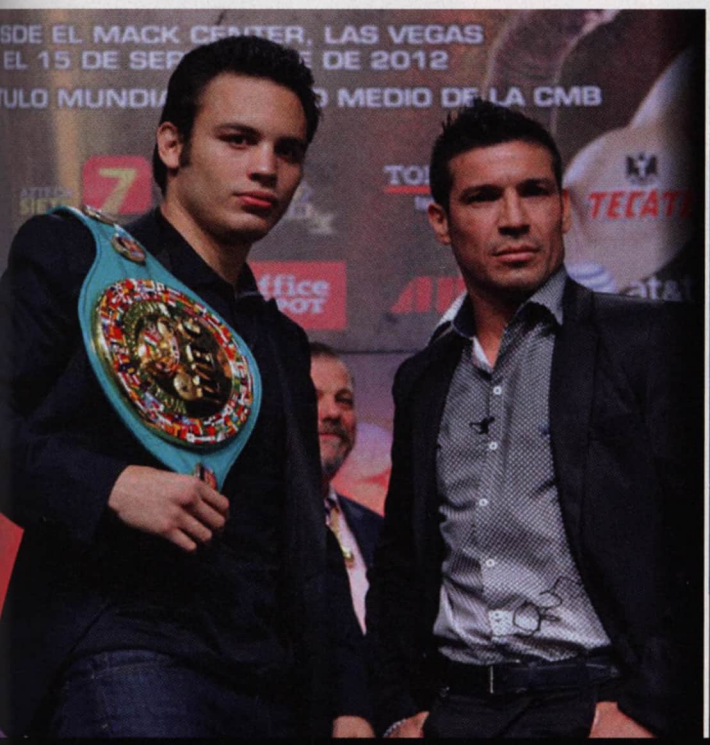


The upside of the competing promotions on Sept. 15 is that the situation would've been worse had both fights been on pay-per-view TV. Images: **Rafael Soto-Top Rank and Showtime**

A SYMPTOM OF LARGER ISSUES

By: **David Greisman**

The Sept. 15 showdown in Las Vegas and on television between Top Rank's pay-per-view featuring Sergio Martinez vs. Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. and Golden Boy's show pitting Canelo Alvarez against Josesito Lopez is about as destructive to the sport as Floyd Mayweather and Manny Pacquiao not fighting each other.

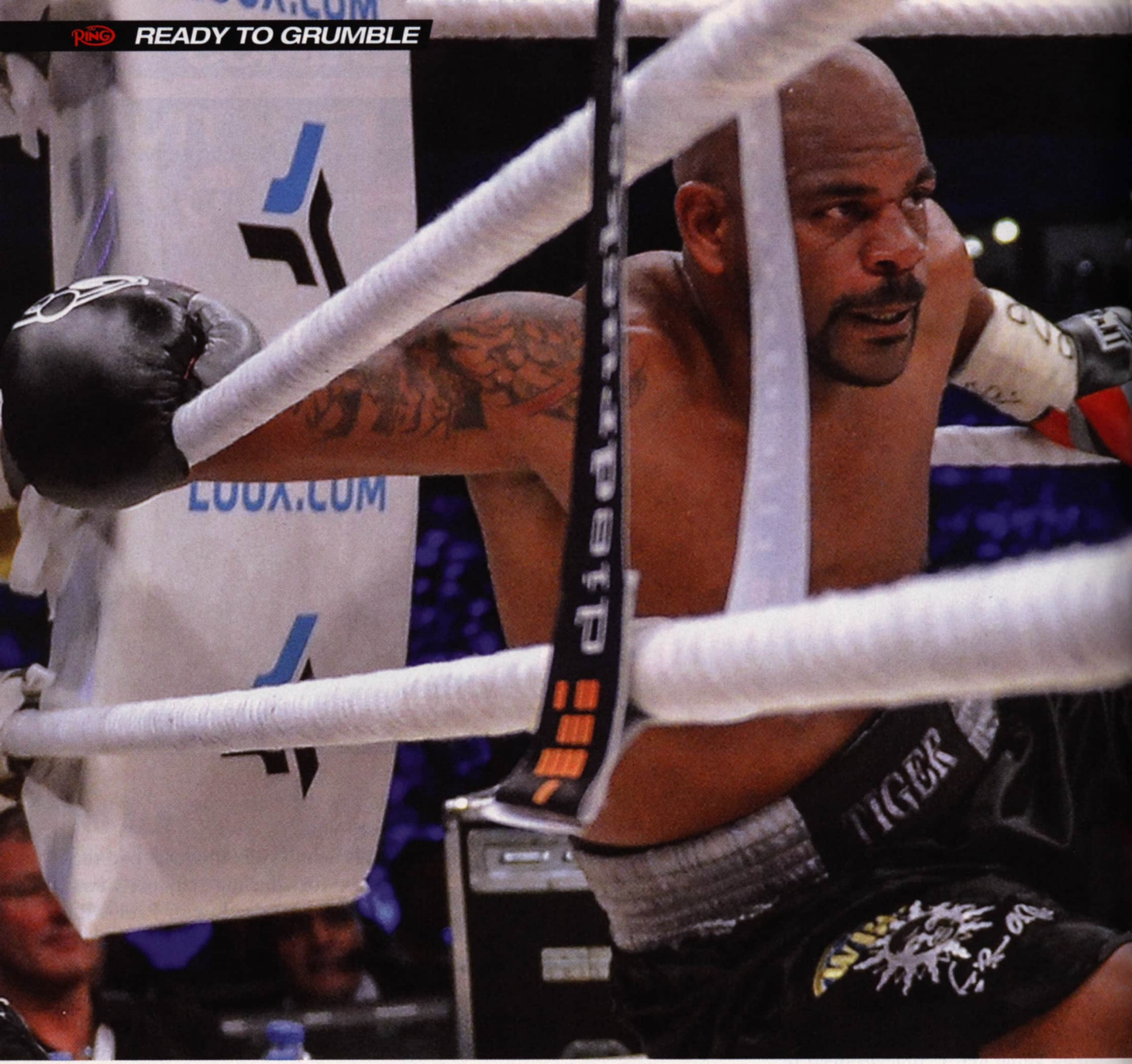
That's not to say that Sept. 15 and Pacquiao-Mayweather are harbingers of our sport's downfall. Though we've seen Manny and Floyd share the ring with others over the years, watching with the same prolonged agony and unrequited desire as seeing your high school crush dance with different partners each year, Pacquiao-Mayweather is still but one fight. And Sept. 15 is still but one night.

Yet just as people took rooting interests in the case of Pacquiao vs. Mayweather but wound up with nothing but blame, there's no good reason to take sides in the Top Rank-Golden Boy competition. We assume we're getting screwed because it happens so often, but they're the ones who will win or lose. Not us.

It would've been worse had the plans for dueling pay-per-views continued. Instead, with Paul Williams' career-ending injury, James Kirkland's wishy-washiness and Victor Ortiz putting forth the boxing equivalent of a ground ball through Bill Buckner's legs, we end up with Canelo Alvarez vs. Josesito Lopez on Showtime.

The rule in business is to underpromise and overdeliver, also a useful maxim in romance. Golden Boy was in a no-win situation. Barring a bout with Miguel Cotto, who wasn't interested, any pay-per-view featuring Canelo Alvarez against someone else would be seen as a cash grab capitalizing on the traditional Mexican Independence Day weekend boxing broadcast.

Yet promoter Oscar De La Hoya thrice promised "History" on Twitter, and his company then

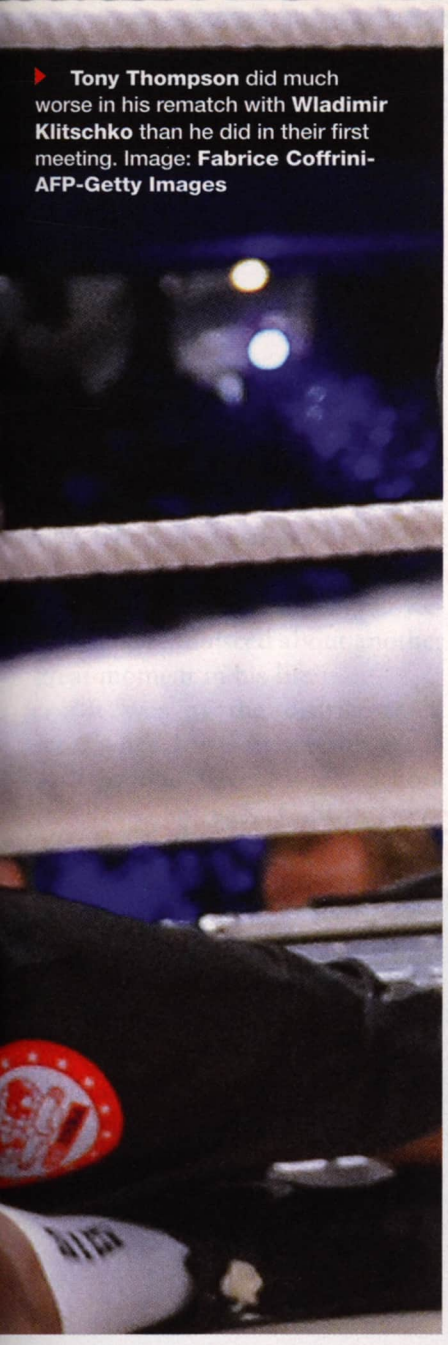


skipped over a legion of 154-pound titleholders and contenders and instead is putting Alvarez in with a guy who weighed in light for his welterweight bout with Ortiz and afterward stated his intentions to return to 140 pounds.

None of this is Lopez's fault. He deserves a major payday after upsetting Ortiz, though not the potential career-altering beating that could come from stepping in with the much larger Alvarez. And the making of Alvarez-Lopez provides a simple solution to the Sept. 15 showdown: Some will choose to watch the free fight instead of Martinez-Chavez. Some will fork over their money for the middleweight championship bout and catch a later broadcast or recorded version of Showtime's card. Nobody will be forced to choose between pay-per-views.

Boxing will continue to exist despite these problems. But these problems are symptomatic of larger issues that keep The Sweet Science from being even sweeter. Competition is supposed to be preferable to complacency. Yet we never end up with a better product because of the competition between Top Rank and Golden Boy.

Instead, they make the money they want without making many of the fights we want. That approach — business before boxing — has been the harbinger of the sport's decline. The people who control the sport are getting richer, but the product some of us are still choosing to consume leaves us poorer in so many ways.



Tony Thompson did much worse in his rematch with **Wladimir Klitschko** than he did in their first meeting. Image: **Fabrice Coffrini-AFP-Getty Images**

* * *

Speaking of poor, there was Tony Thompson's performance in his rematch with heavyweight champion Wladimir Klitschko. It was almost fitting that the fight was in Switzerland; Thompson was neutralized from the moment he arrived.

Klitschko has now gone largely untouched for four years, which sounds uncomfortably similar to my high school days. He's always too technically proficient. His opponents, meanwhile, are either deficient in desire or just plain outsized, outskilled and overmatched. Before the Thompson rematch, there was Jean Marc Mormeck, David Haye, the Samuel Peter rematch, Eddie Chambers, Ruslan Chagaev and Hasim Rahman.

The last fighter to land more than a few power shots per round on Wladimir Klitschko? Tony Thompson in 2008. In the rematch, however, Thompson landed less than half as many power punches in six rounds — seven total — than he did in the first round of his first fight with Klitschko four years ago.

It would be unfair to describe him as a punching bag; there was no punching. It'd be better to describe Thompson as a piñata, except a piñata will swing back after being hit. And unlike a piñata, nothing good came out of Tony Thompson.

Victor Ortiz (right, during his loss to **Josesito Lopez**) is dismissed as a quitter by some but few seem to recognize the entertainment value of his fighting spirit. **Image: Naoki Fukuda**

* * *

It's perfectly fine that us sports fans so love to glorify the underdogs, who become beloved for their heart as they struggle against those who've been gifted with much more than just grit. It's strange, though, that while we so enjoy seeing what the lesser boxers can do with what little they have, we also tend to root for many name fighters to fail.

We want the underdogs to prove us wrong. We want the stars to prove us right. You can't spell *schadenfreude* — pleasure taken in others' troubles — without f-r-a-u-d.

We long wanted Julio Cesar Chavez Jr., a middleweight titleholder, to take a beating against Sergio Martinez, the true champion. But we hated to see Arturo Gatti get trounced against Floyd Mayweather Jr.

We summarily dismissed Victor Ortiz as a quitter after his history of giving up in tough fights. We were proven right yet again when Ortiz retired in his corner with a broken jaw during the Josesito Lopez fight. But we ignored the fact he has long entertained, giving us both action and drama.

Ortiz isn't in his native Kansas anymore, but for whatever he lacks in courage, he's still shown plenty of heart. If only we can have the brains to appreciate that. ■

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JABS & STRAIGHT WRITES

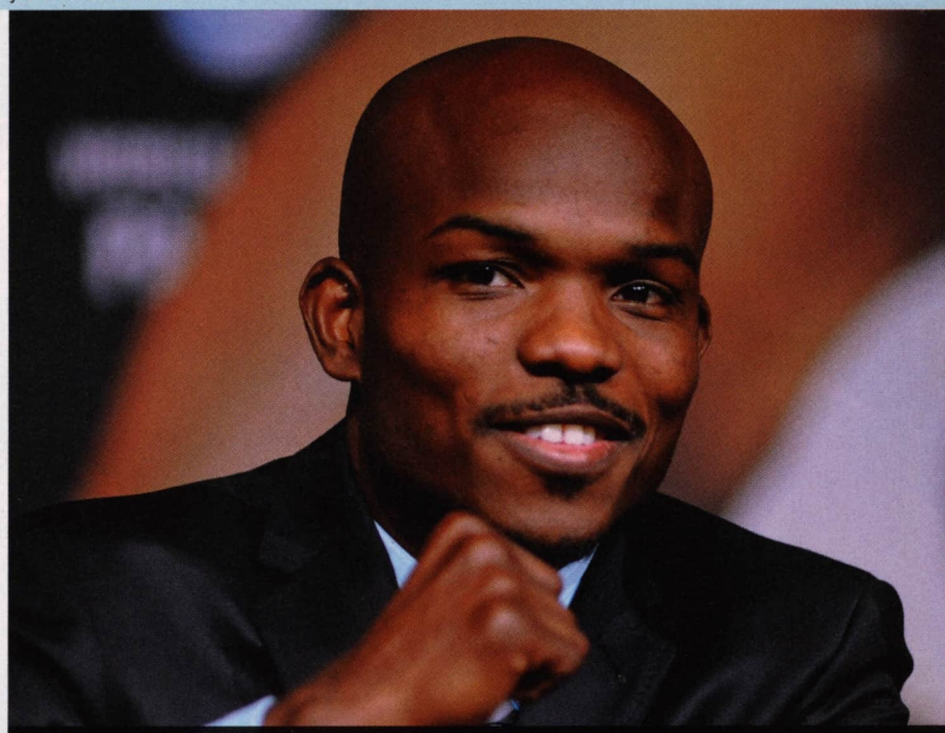
By **Thomas Hauser**

GREATEST MOMENT IN SPORTS ... OUTSIDE OF BOXING

TIM BRADLEY

Tim Bradley scored his greatest ring triumph when he decisioned Manny Pacquiao on June 9 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Recently, he reminisced about another great moment in his life:

"It was at the district track meet when I was in seventh grade at Raymond Cree Middle School [in Palm Springs, Calif.]. Every school in the district was there. Each team had three runners entered in the mile run. There were other guys who were favored over me. At first, I was in the pack and tried to work my way to the front but got blocked in. By the start of the last lap, I was running second. I was tired but I was used to pushing myself. I caught the leader on the final turn and we battled stride for stride to the very end. I was hurting; I could hardly breathe. But I wanted it so bad. It was like I gave everything I had and then I found something more to give. It was close but I edged him. I felt very proud of myself for winning that race. I felt like the man."



▶ **Timothy Bradley** went the distance in his greatest moment outside boxing.
Image: **David Becker-Getty Images**

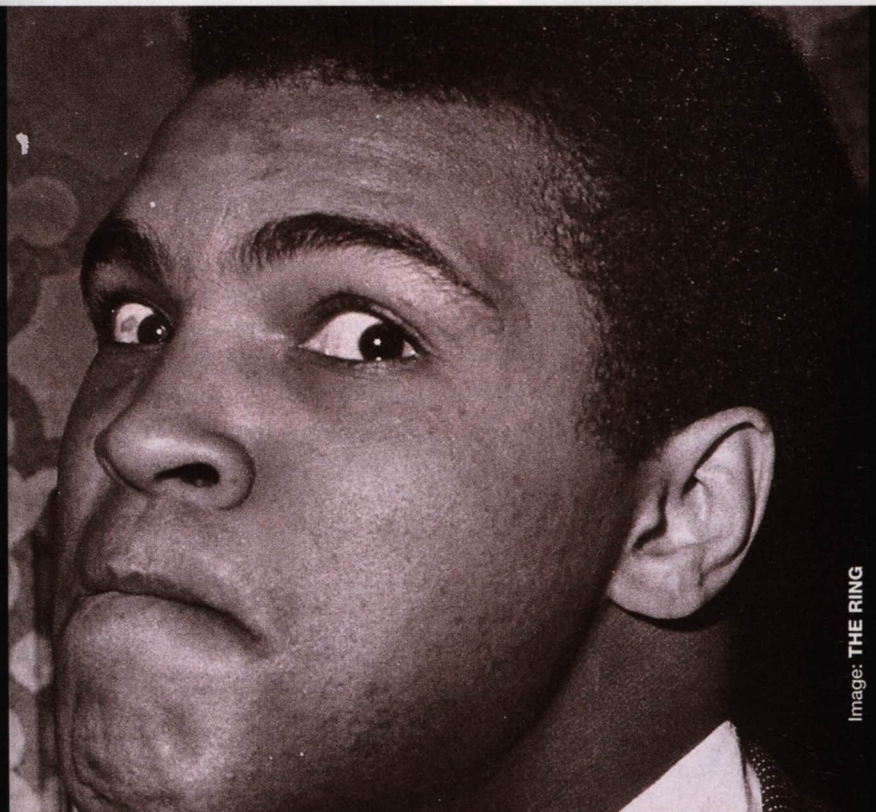


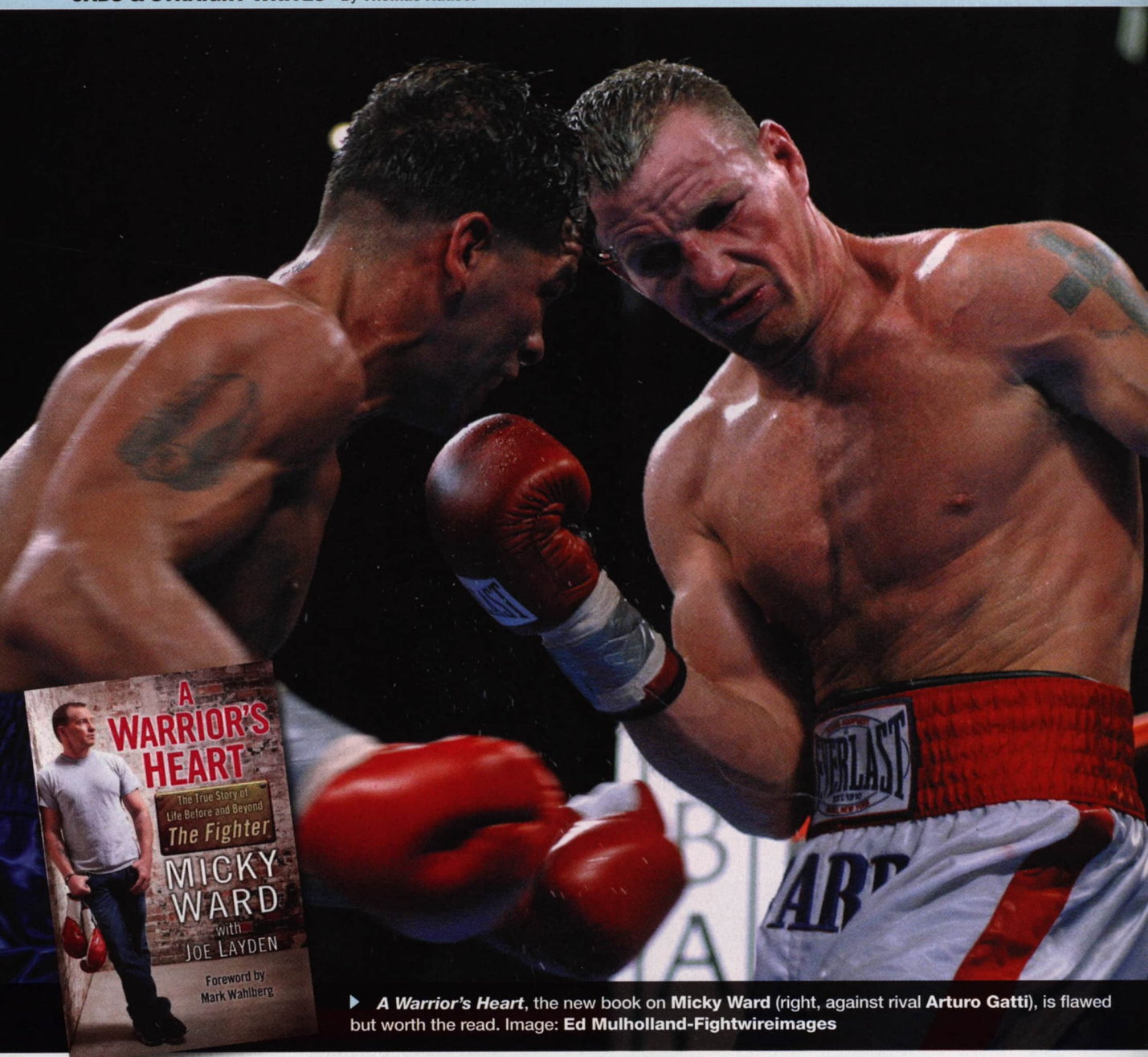
Image: **THE RING**

QUICK QUIZ

1. Who said, "A prizefight is like a cowboy movie. There has to be a good guy and a bad guy. People pay their money to see me lose. Only, in my cowboy movie, the bad guy always wins."

2. This is a trick question; be careful: Who was the first man to knock Muhammad Ali down in a professional fight?

3. In late 1963, Cassius Clay recorded a song that was released the following year as a 45 single in the United States and England. Which song did he record?



▶ ***A Warrior's Heart***, the new book on **Micky Ward** (right, against rival **Arturo Gatti**), is flawed but worth the read. Image: **Ed Mulholland-Fightwireimages**

FLAWED BUT SOLID

Joe Layden wrote an exceptionally good book entitled *The Last Great Fight* about James "Buster" Douglas's historic upset of Mike Tyson. Micky Ward was as honest in and out of the ring as any fighter ever. The problem with their collaboration on Ward's autobiography — *A Warrior's Heart* — is that it often fails to capture Micky's voice.

That's clear from the prologue, which reads in part, "Adrenaline-soaked cotton swabs protrude from your nostrils. An enswell struggles to flush blood pooling along the harsh ridges of your cheekbones and eyebrows. ... Like anybody else, I have my own narrative — history and circumstance that go a long way toward shaping the person I am and the man I still hope to be."

That's good writing. But it's not how Micky thinks, speaks, or writes. And there are also a number of nagging factual inaccuracies in *A Warrior's Heart* (such as placing NBC's *Contender* series before, rather than after, Ward's fight against Shea Neary).

That said, there's some nice material in the book. A sampler follows:

"You can put it any way you want, choose flowery language that makes you feel better about it. But the truth is this. Professional box-

ing is about trying to inflict as much damage as possible on your opponent. Every fighter who steps in the ring understands his mission: Hurt the other guy."

"Losing your first fight is like losing your virginity. You can't ever get it back. It's a rite of passage."

"If you get knocked out, your career is sure to take a turn for the worse. You're damaged goods, literally and figuratively. Once your brain gets scrambled like that, you're more susceptible to further deterioration down the road. The brain never fully recovers. With each concussion, there is residual damage. And there's something else that happens in the wake of a knockout. People look at you differently. And you look at yourself differently."

And then there's Ward on his money punch:

"As bad as it is to get knocked out with a shot to the head, it's nowhere near as painful as a perfectly placed body shot. You draw the left in tight and you pivot hard, rotating your hips like a golfer on the tee. Then you drive right through the man, sinking your fist deep into his tissue so far and clean that you swear, if you weren't wearing a glove, you could grab his liver with your fingers. Drive a left hook deep into a man's belly right below that floating rib, and he is instantly incapacitated. There is something elegant about it; the delayed reaction, the way the punch lands and the fight continues until suddenly, after a second or two, the man who has been hit drops to one knee in a display of utter submissiveness. He can wait five seconds, ten seconds, a minute. It doesn't matter. The paralyzing pain isn't going away."

LOL

Steve Albert has enjoyed a long and illustrious career in sports broadcasting as the voice of the New York Mets, New York Jets, Golden State Warriors and New Jersey Devils. Boxing fans know him for his service as Showtime's blow-by-blow commentator for more than two decades.

Recently, Albert was reminiscing about a man who stopped him on the street and said, "I watch you all the time. I think you're wonderful."

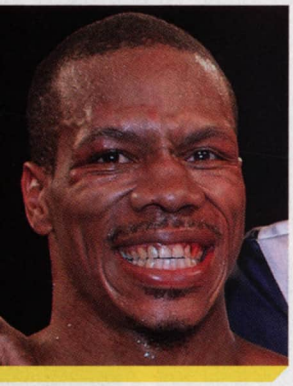
Albert thanked his admirer and said it was gratifying whenever someone liked his work on television.

"Are you on television?" the man queried.

QUIZ ANSWERS: **1.** Sonny Liston 2. On March 8, 1971, Joe Frazier became the first man to knock Ali down. Prior to that, Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr. had been knocked down by Sonny Banks and Henry Cooper. 3. Cassius Clay recorded "Stand By Me," which had been a Top-10 hit for Ben E. King in 1961.

Thomas Hauser can be reached by email at thauser@rcn.com. His most recent book (*Winks and Daggers: An Inside Look at Another Year in Boxing*) was published by the University of Arkansas Press.

WHAT BOXERS ARE INTO OUTSIDE THE SPORT

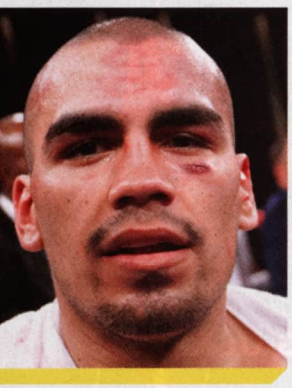


CORNELIUS "K9" BUNDRAGE

MUSIC: Gospel music, "mostly Smokie Norful."
CAR: "I drive a Saturn, but I need a new car and I'm about to get one, probably a Ford Taurus."
FOOD: Pasta, Chicken Alfredo and cheesecake.
TATOO(S): No tattoos. "I'm flawless. I don't believe in writing on my body. It's in the Bible, and I'm faithful."
ATHLETE (OUTSIDE BOXING): "My wife. She plays basketball and high school ball. Her name is Shawana Bundrage."
MOVIE: *The Greatest Story Ever Told*, "because it's the flat-out truth."
VIDEO GAME: *Ms. Pac-Man*. "Who knows, I might fight Pac-Man one day."

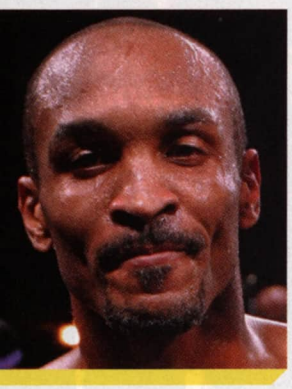
VANES MARTIROSYAN

MUSIC: Lil Wayne
CAR: "I drive a Chevy Camaro 2012, and my favorite car is a Mercedes."
FOOD: Mexican food and sushi
TATOO(S): "I have a few tattoos. The one on my right rib means 'nightmare' in Japanese, and the one on my right shoulder is the Armenian Coat of Arms. The one on my left shoulder is my wife's name, Gaby, and there is a lion there as well. The one on my left above my wrist says 'Veni, vidi, vici,' which means 'I came, I saw, I conquered.' I have one on the back of my neck, which is a cross and angel wings.
ATHLETE (OUTSIDE BOXING): Kobe Bryant
MOVIE: *Gladiator*
VIDEO GAME: *FIFA Soccer*. "Being Armenian, soccer is the No. 1 sport. I grew up around it."



CARLOS MOLINA

MUSIC: "I listen to a type of Spanish music called *Corridos*. That's what I come out to going into the ring. Every time I hear it, it's time to go to war."
CAR: "I drive a pickup truck. It's a Chevy Silverado. For some reason, I like trucks."
FOOD: "I like everything, but definitely Mexican food. That's No. 1."
TATOO(S): "I have one on my right arm that says '100 percent Mexican.' Other than that, I don't like tattoos. I would rather be clean. I have one, but it's not that big. It's old school."
ATHLETE (OUTSIDE BOXING): "I know you said it has to be outside of boxing, but my favorite athlete is Salvador Sanchez."
MOVIE: *Tommy Boy*. "I like funny movies. You can't go wrong with Chris Farley."
VIDEO GAME: "Any of the *Call of Duty* games."



RANDALL BAILEY

MUSIC: Young Jeezy
CAR: "My favorite car is a Lamborghini, but I drive a Malibu and an Expedition."
FOOD: "I like the home-cooked meals. My favorite meal is fried chicken, baked beans and macaroni and cheese or potato salad. Throw some crab legs in there."
TATOO(S): "I have four. One on my chest, two on my arms and one on the back of my neck. The one on my chest is body armor, as in a shield to protect myself. In this business, you don't know who is protecting you."
ATHLETE (OUTSIDE BOXING): Minnesota running back Adrian Peterson
MOVIE: *Pretty Woman*
VIDEO GAME: *Call of Duty*

Images: Fightwire

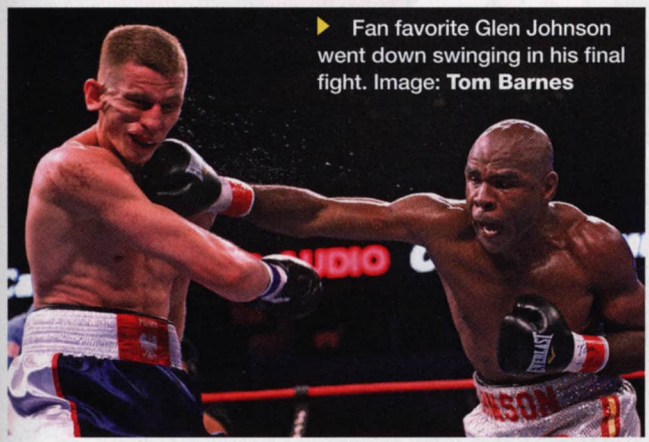
GOOD, BAD, WORSE

THE BEST AND WORST IN BOXING FROM THE PAST MONTH

By: **Michael Rosenthal**

GOOD

July 14. A wonderful day. First, in London, David Haye knocked out Dereck Chisora in the fifth round of their grudge match before an estimated 30,000 enthralled fans at Upton Park. And this was no average KO. Haye, coming out of "retirement," landed the kind of crushing blows that take your breath away and leave your opponent in a heap. Then, in Las Vegas, Danny Garcia landed a left from hell to set up a dizzying fourth round and an upset knockout of Amir Khan. Boxing needs more days like this.



Fan favorite Glen Johnson went down swinging in his final fight. Image: **Tom Barnes**

BAD

Glen Johnson announced his retirement after losing a unanimous decision to young Andrew Fonfara on July 13 in Chicago. Sad moment. Johnson lost most of his biggest fights, a fate that might've destroyed a lesser man. "The Road Warrior" was admired by fans not because of his record but because of the fire with which he fought, his willingness to fight anyone and the grace with which he carried himself out of the ring. These are characteristics all fighters should emulate. Johnson will be greatly missed.

WORSE

Martin Tucker of Toledo, Ohio, would say it doesn't get much worse than this. The fighter had just won a four-round fight in April, snapping a losing streak at six fights, when an FBI agent seized the Q-Tip used on Tucker's bloody nose, the Detroit News reported. What the hell? Well, it seems Tucker was suspected of robbing a bank in 2009 and detectives needed a sample of his DNA. Turned out it matched DNA found on a mask worn by one of the robbers. Tucker was arrested on July 17.

10 A MONTHLY BOXING LIST

THIS MONTH: Words or phrases associated with boxing that are also used in other contexts. Can you think of other examples? Email me at mrosenthal@ringtv.com.

1. **NOT PULLING PUNCHES:** Telling it like it is
2. **KNOCK OUT:** An attractive or impressive person or thing
3. **PUNCHY:** Dazed or confused
4. **BOXERS:** Boxer shorts
5. **BELOW THE BELT:** Not fair
6. **DOWN FOR THE COUNT:** Hopeless
7. **ON THE ROPES:** In trouble
8. **THROW IN THE TOWEL:** Giving up
9. **ROLL WITH THE PUNCHES:** Taking punishment and carrying on
10. **TOE TO TOE:** Combatants of any kind going at it

RING POLL

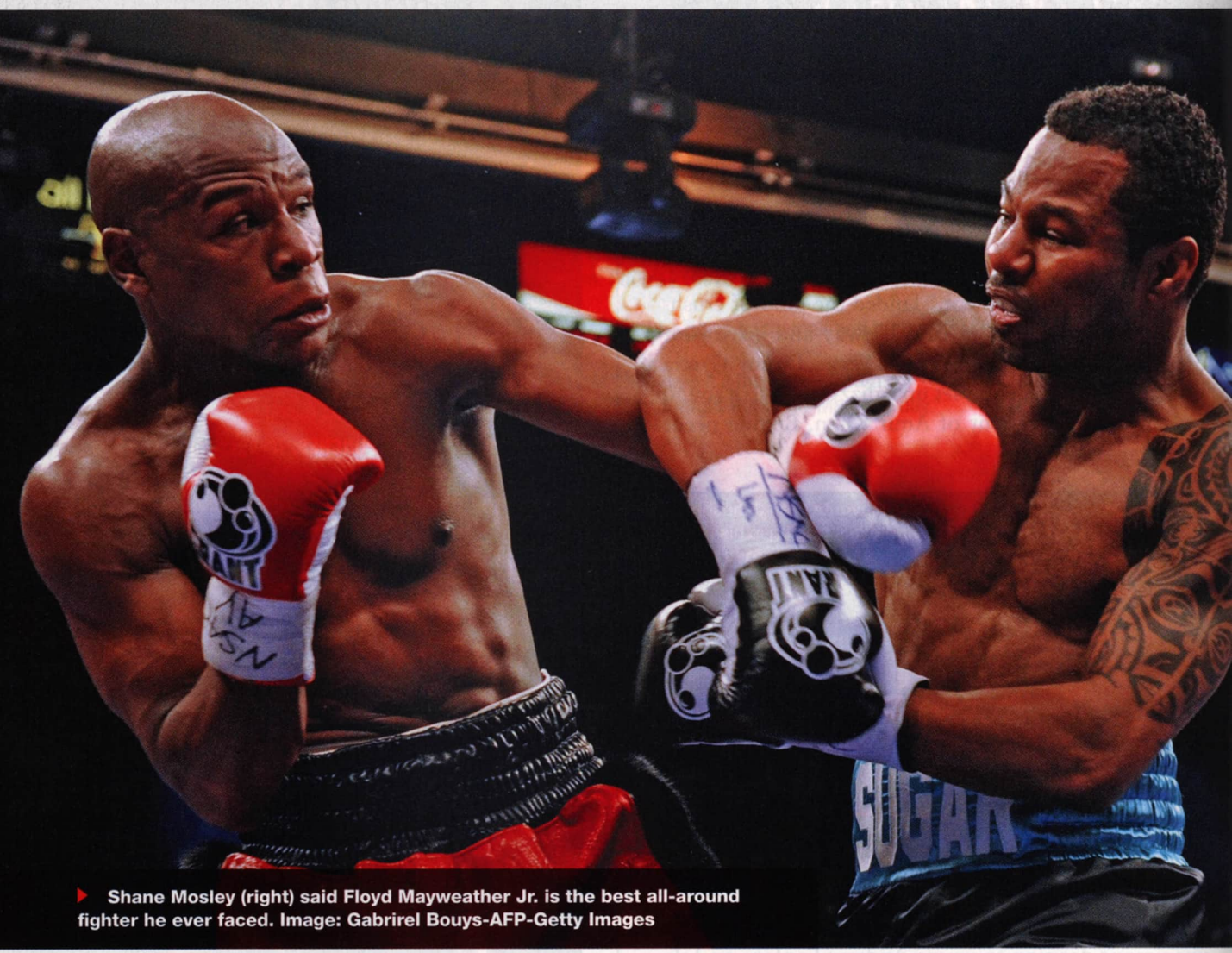
A MONTHLY POLL OF OUR RINGTV.COM READERS. THIS MONTH: IN A YEAR OF UPSETS, WHICH IS THE BIGGEST ONE?

Image: John Gurzinski-AFP-Getty Images

THE PERCENTAGES:

Timothy Bradley-Manny Pacquiao	43.3
Danny Garcia-Amir Khan	21.6
Josesito Lopez-Victor Ortiz	16.2
Sonny Boy Jaro-Pongsaklek Wonjongkam	10.8
Carl Froch-Lucian Bute	4.8
Randall Bailey-Mike Jones	1.9
Denis Grachev-Ismayl Sillakh	1.4

NOTE: 6,905 readers voted in the poll.



Shane Mosley (right) said Floyd Mayweather Jr. is the best all-around fighter he ever faced. Image: Gabrirel Bouys-AFP-Getty Images

SHANE MOSLEY

By **Lem Satterfield**

Sugar Shane Mosley's legacy will be one of a man who took on all challenges and was rarely involved in a boring fight.

The five-time titleholder in three divisions, known for his warrior mentality and natural gifts, engaged a long list of fighters who were among the best of their time. Among them: Oscar De La Hoya, Vernon Forrest, Manny Pacquiao, Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Miguel Cotto — all future Hall of Famers.

Mosley was a dominating lightweight, building a record of 32-0 (with 30 knockouts) before moving up to welterweight. And he had great success against his Mexican rivals, winning 21 consecutive fights against them before losing to Saul "Canelo" Alvarez in May.

Among Mosley's career highlights are two victories over De La Hoya, although the second was tarnished when he later acknowleged using performance-enhancing drugs before the fight, two knockouts of Fernando Vargas and KOs of Ricardo Mayorga and Antonio Margarito.

Mosley also defeated world titleholders Jesse James Leija, John John Molina, Phillip Holiday and Luis Collazo, knocking out out Leija and Molina. Among his losses: Forrest (twice), Winky Wright (twice), Cotto, Mayweather and Pacquiao.

Mosley (46-8-1, 39 KOs) retired in June at the age of 40. He has moved into training and pro-

moting his son Shane Mosley Jr., a 21-year-old amateur who hopes to fight in the 2016 Olympics.

Mosley shared with THE RING the best fighters he faced in 10 key categories.

BEST OVERALL: FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.

That would have to be Floyd. He had everything. He had about three different categories where he was the best at. Floyd was the best overall fighter. The most speed, best defense and a good jab and good offense. I think that it's also what he does with his movement and his angles.

To be fair, he caught me later in my career. But he puts everything together, offensively and defensively, and he has the movement.

BEST BOXER: MAYWEATHER

That would probably have to be Floyd. It's how he evades punches with a blend of his defense and his offense. He's always on his toes and he's always slipping and sliding.

BEST CHIN: ANTONIO MARGARITO

I would have to say that Margarito had the best chin. Even though I knocked him out, it took a long time of me hitting him on the button. Round after round, he stood up against some solid shots.

Even when I hit Floyd with one solid shot, he wobbled when I got the opportunity. Floyd had a good chin, but I would have to say that the guy with the best chin was Margarito. He stood up to Pacquiao's punches as well as mine until I was able to break him down.

FASTEST FEET: SERGIO MORA

That would have to be Sergio Mora. I was surprised at how well he moved. He got around the ring very well. Very fast feet. Moved good. He was a junior middleweight who was fighting me at that time, but I was still surprised at his footspeed.

Shane Mosley (right) was impressed with rival **Fernando Vargas'** physical strength. Image: **Ethan Miller-Getty Images**

FASTEST HANDS: MAYWEATHER

I would again have to say that's Floyd. Floyd's timing and his speed were very, very quick. He was able to get off the gun really quick. I felt like I was competing with him, but I would have to say that Floyd had the fastest hands of anyone that I've fought.

STRONGEST: FERNANDO VARGAS

The strongest guy that I fought, physically, was Fernando Vargas. He hit pretty hard but he was also very strong, physically. Winky Wright was strong, but Vargas was very, very physical in both fights.

SMARTEST: MAYWEATHER

He knows how to change up the fight and the tempo in the middle of the fight. He can go from one thing and one strategy to another very well. If you get one thing working, he can change up and make you have to do something else. He was probably the smartest.

BEST DEFENSE: WINKY WRIGHT

Winky had, I think, the best defense back then. Floyd had good defense, but Winky caught me earlier in my career. I think that Winky was really good at catching and countering. He kept his hands up really high and I think that back then, he would have had the best defense. He was very, very good at catching and then touching you.

BEST PUNCHER: VERNON FORREST AND MANNY PACQUIAO

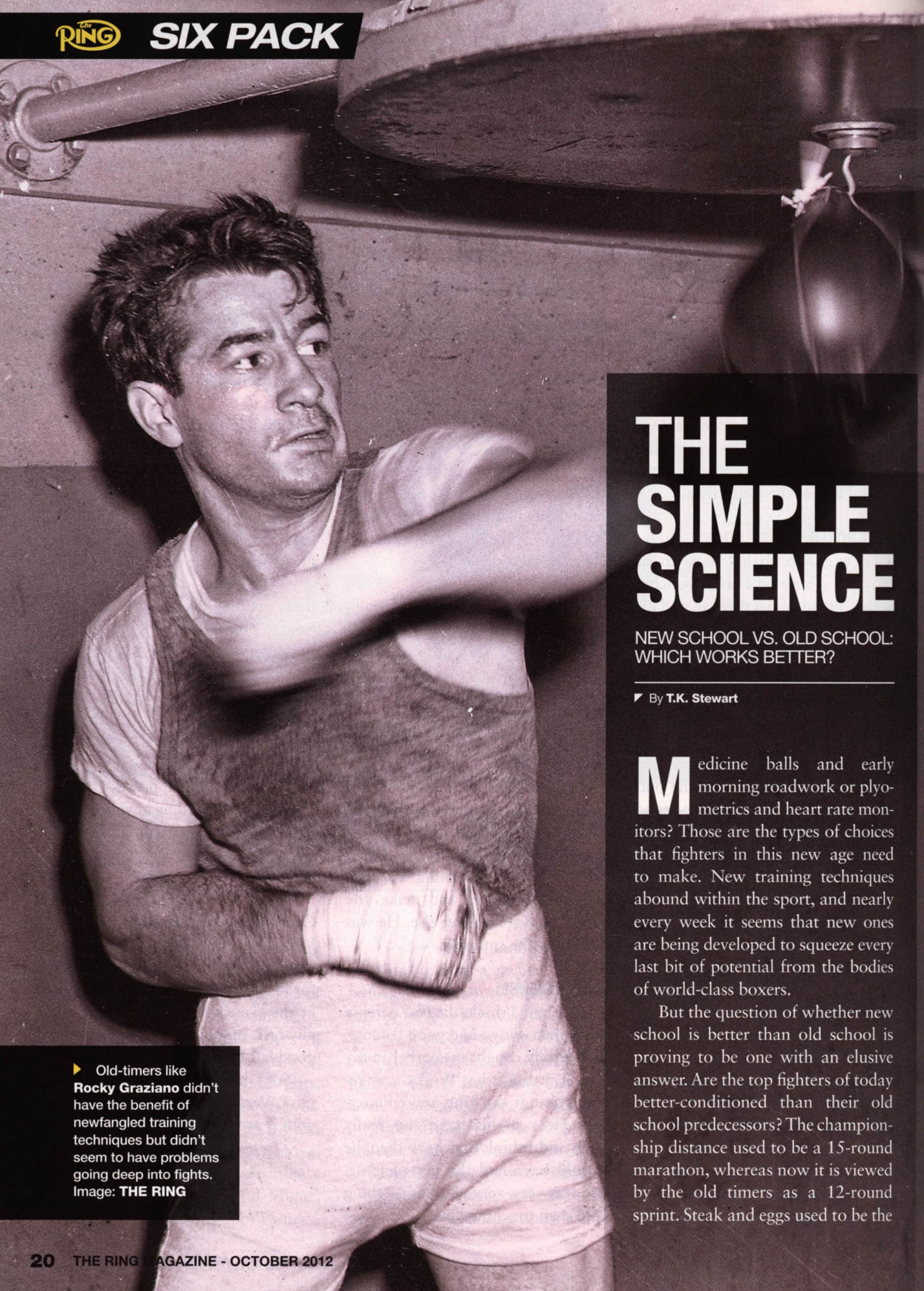
I think that the best puncher would have to be Vernon Forrest because back then I had a pretty good chin and I had never been dropped, and he was the first guy to drop me. His power is a little different than Pacquiao had. But those are the two guys who knocked me down, so those are the two guys that I would have to give it to.

I'm leaning more toward Vernon, because he had the heavier punches, whereas Pacquiao's was more of a flash knockdown where I was dizzy.I don't know if it was the injury that I had or the punching power that Pacquiao possesses. But I was never buzzed by anybody else like I was by those two guys.

BEST JAB: FORREST AND OSCAR DE LA HOYA

Oscar had a terrific jab, but when I fought Vernon, Vernon had a tremendous jab as well. It was hard for me to get past Vernon's jab, but at the same time, Oscar had a really fast, snapping jab along with a good left hook.

So I had problems with both guys. Vernon had the height to go with it as well. ■



THE SIMPLE SCIENCE

NEW SCHOOL VS. OLD SCHOOL: WHICH WORKS BETTER?

By **T.K. Stewart**

Medicine balls and early morning roadwork or plyometrics and heart rate monitors? Those are the types of choices that fighters in this new age need to make. New training techniques abound within the sport, and nearly every week it seems that new ones are being developed to squeeze every last bit of potential from the bodies of world-class boxers.

But the question of whether new school is better than old school is proving to be one with an elusive answer. Are the top fighters of today better-conditioned than their old school predecessors? The championship distance used to be a 15-round marathon, whereas now it is viewed by the old timers as a 12-round sprint. Steak and eggs used to be the

Old-timers like **Rocky Graziano** didn't have the benefit of newfangled training techniques but didn't seem to have problems going deep into fights. Image: **THE RING**

normal menu, whereas these days protein drinks and tofu are finding their way onto the plates of many.

It wasn't long ago that bouts were contested over longer distances in oppressive weather conditions. Think June 11, 1982, when Larry Holmes and Gerry Cooney squared off in the parking lot at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas on what was the warmest day in Nevada so far that year. There were no sports drinks in the corner back then and no high-altitude training hi-jinks. Yet the two heavyweights battled away for 13 rounds while consuming only water in their respective corners. Could Wladimir Klitschko, who incorporates yoga and swimming into his regimen, compete at that level in those conditions today?

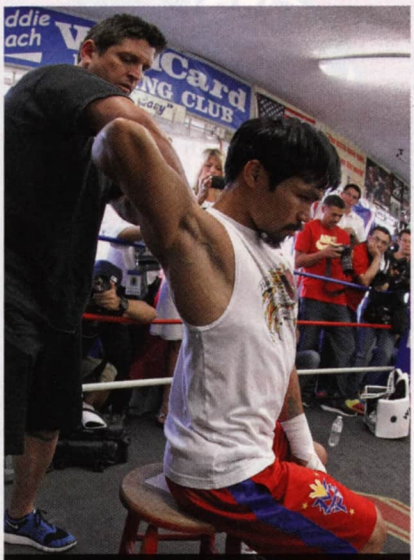
Tommy Gallagher, who could be characterized as an old-school type trainer, is firm in the belief that the new age is nothing more than smoke and mirrors.

"It's very simple, it's about toughness," Gallagher said. "These kids now, they get a little insecure. Somebody tells them, 'You should eat grass and drink distilled water' and they'll do it! These guys are full of s--t! It's a primitive game. It's either you can fight or you can't. It's got too technical! There's too much bulls--t!"

Gallagher should know. The Brooklyn native won the 1959 New York Golden Gloves championship and has trained some of the toughest fighters ever to have laced them up: Vito Antuofermo, Doug DeWitt and Merqui Sosa are just a few of Gallagher's former pupils.

"The point is, it's about being able to sustain the punishment you take," he said. "You got 4,000 special trainers now. You got a nutritionist, the weightliftin' ... this and that! Feed these guys some meat! You give me a guy that says, 'I wanna be a fighter' ... you give me that guy ... and I'll give you the fighter of your life!"

Alex Ariza, the strength and conditioning guru who is behind the nutrition as well as the non-boxing workouts of Manny Pacquiao, Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. and formerly Amir Khan, would beg to disagree with Gallagher's assessment. Ariza stresses a scientific diet where calories are counted, portions are measured and training more than necessary is frowned upon. Ariza has a plethora of drills, programs and nutritional supplements that are tailored to each of his clients — and it's difficult to find fault in the results.



▶ **Alex Ariza**, here working with client **Manny Pacquiao**, is a proponent of modern science when it comes to training. Image: **Stephen Dunn-Getty Images**

Pacquiao has successfully traversed numerous weight divisions while simultaneously maintaining his handspeed and punching power. Chavez displayed a solid middleweight physique in his most impressive knockout win to date over Andy Lee. And Khan, who left Ariza before losing to Danny Garcia, has been an undeniable talent who possesses equal parts of strength, speed and stamina. Ariza maintains that when he helped to train Khan for his bout versus Lamont Peterson that Khan did not perform a single conventional sit-up, which has been considered a primary exercise for fighters for over a century.

"Look, at one point Freddie and I were undefeated in over 30 fights together," said Ariza in defense of his methods. "I've gotta stick with that. Some people are gonna like it and some people aren't. You can't please everybody. I do what I think is the best."

Certainly the days of soaking hands and immersing one's face in brine to toughen the skin as Jack Dempsey was known to have done are long over with. But as in all sports, revolutionary training methods are constantly emerging in boxing. However, the evidence seems to suggest the hoopla that surrounds the newfound ways is unwarranted.

Fighters from the past did not miss weight like the fighters of today do. A fighter often spent his entire career fighting in one weight division and competed at more natural weights for their bodies. Instances of drying out and gaining 20 pounds between the weigh-in and the actual fight were few and far between, whereas today, with low-fat foods and meal replacements, it is commonplace. Fighters now change weight divisions with such frequency that it is difficult to keep track.

"It ain't complicated," said trainer Floyd Mayweayther Sr. of what it takes to get into shape and win world titles. "Do the roadwork, hit the bags, skip some rope. It works. Let me tell you, I fought for 16 years at 147 pounds and I always made weight. A lot of times I was training myself, you know what I mean? I was going hungry at night. These guys now, they got a trainer for the trainer and someone to buy the food and someone to cook it. You don't need all that, man. Get in the gym and get to work and that's that. All this other stuff? Forget about it, man. Forget about it." ■

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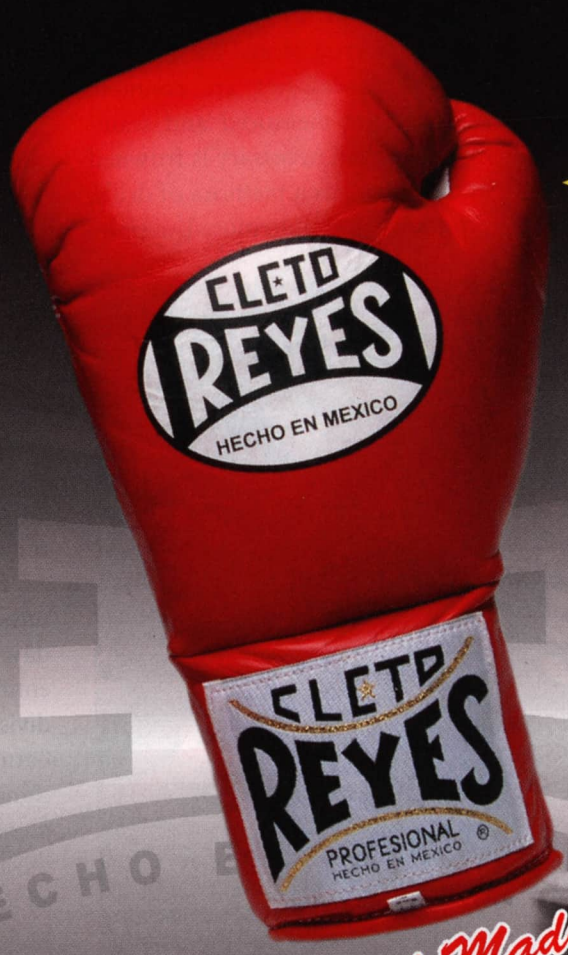

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Enrique Bolanos was an idol in L.A. Image: **THE RING**

ALMOST CHAMPIONS

By **Brian Harty**

Of the many levels of recognition in boxing, none is more coveted than "world champion." For every one of the elite few who reach this inner sanctum, many others are left stranded at the threshold. That frequently says nothing of a fighter's worth, however.

Enrique Bolanos, who passed away on June 4 at the age of 87, left Mexico as a lanky 17-year-old in 1941 and was moved directly into the pros by promoter George Parnassus. His first fight at the Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles was in 1943. After that, Bolanos would establish a tradition of sold-out venues and become the most popular boxer Southern California has ever seen, even surpassing the height of Oscar De La Hoya's prime.

Bolanos' great rival was another local "Golden Boy," Art Aragon, who was himself popular to the point of dating stars like Marilyn Monroe and Jane Mansfield. He and Bolanos met twice in the ring, both fights ending in knockouts for Aragon.

"Aragon got popular, and then got unpopular," said matchmaker Don Chargin, who witnessed several of Bolanos' fights. "Mexican fans didn't forgive him for knocking out Bolanos."

The beloved all-action star met his Waterloo long before Aragon, though, in the fists of Hall of Famer Ike Williams. The first time they fought for the world lightweight title in 1946 at L.A.'s Wrigley Field, Williams won by knockout in the eighth round. Bolanos went on a 20-0-1 streak before their rematch at the same venue two years later. Chargin saw the fight in a San Jose movie theater a week after it happened and recalls the admiration bestowed on the boxer with supreme footwork and a whistling left hook.

"With Balanos it was like a reverance," he said. "You couldn't help but root for him."

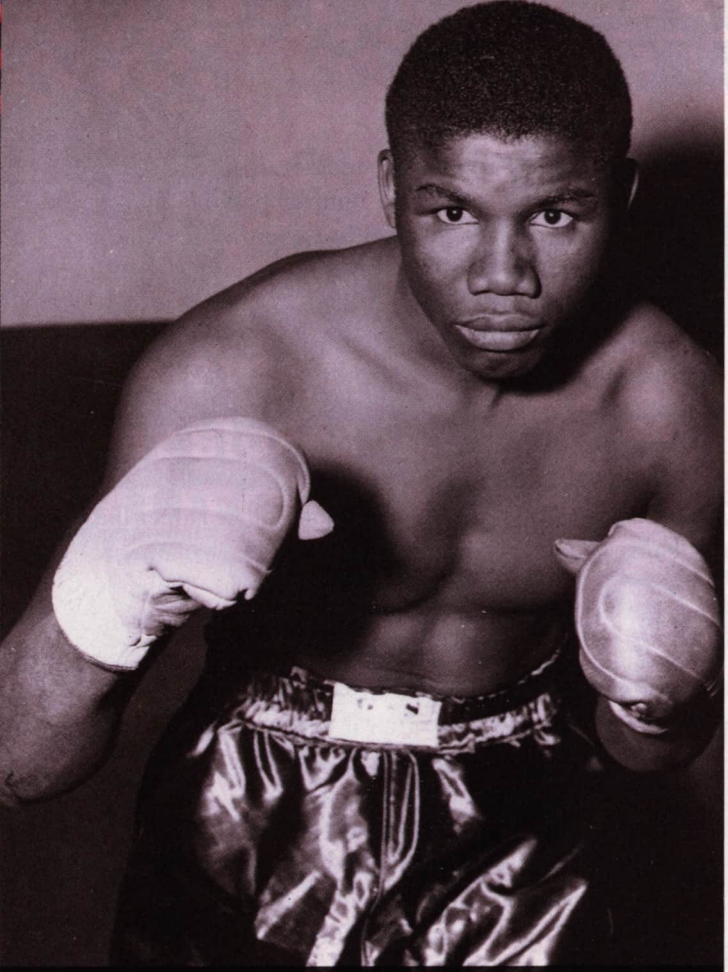
Nevertheless, Balanos lost the rematch by split decision, as well as a third title shot against Williams (with Jack Dempsey as referee) by fourth-round TKO in 1949. His 29 fights after that were marked by more L's than W's, but he finished his career with a record of 79-22-5 (44 knockouts), having fought the likes of Maxie Docusen, Paddy DeMarco and John Thomas, as well as Hall of Famers Chalky Wright, Manuel Ortiz and Jimmy Carter.

Heavyweight Jimmy Bivins was another fighter who, despite his talents, never attained the fortune of a world title. In fact, he never even got the chance. He implied on at least one occasion that it was because he refused to cooperate with the mafia.

"Bivins fought during an era when, if you were African-American and not *extremely* entertaining, you didn't get a shot," said RingTV.com Editor Doug Fischer. "He wasn't knocking everybody out and he wasn't throwing 150 punches a round. And outside the ring he wasn't exactly Archie Moore." Meaning he wasn't particularly gifted at self-promotion.

Instead, he was a villain. Fight fans packed arenas in his native Cleveland, and then every major city in the U.S. for a chance to boo the tongue-wagging Bivins towards defeat. It didn't happen often, though. On the day he faced Jersey Joe Walcott in 1946, his record stood at 52-5-1.

Bivins was a miniscule heavyweight by today's standards at just 5-foot-9 and spent most of his career



Jimmy Bivins was one of the best fighters never to win a title. Image: **THE RING**

below 190 pounds but possessed an outlandish reach of 79 inches (one inch less than Vitali Klitschko). Even the champion of the era, Joe Louis, publicly wondered why Bivins, who was once ranked as the No. 1 contender in both the light heavyweight and heavyweight divisions, couldn't get a title fight.

Whatever the reason, Bivins built a staggering resume which included, aside from Walcott (to whom he lost a split decision), wins over Hall of Famers Moore and Lloyd Marshall, both by knockout, as well as Ezzard Charles, Billy Soose, Joey Maxim and Teddy Yarosz.

A few of those names would get their revenge (some multiple times) and, like Bolanos, Bivins' later career was peppered with losses. The fight he craved — a championship bout against Louis — never materialized (though he did suffer a 10-round non-title loss to The Brown Bomber in 1951), and Bivins' bitterness reportedly fueled acts of violence against his second wife. In 1998 his story became downright horrid when he was discovered by police in his daughter's attic weighing 110 pounds and covered with sores, a victim of severe neglect. He spent the next 10 years with his sister before moving to a nursing home.

Bivins died on July 4 at age 92. Hopefully the level of recognition he experienced was enough to call it a happy ending. In 1999, he had the satisfaction of seeing *Sports Illustrated* describe him as the greatest modern heavyweight who never got a title shot, his final record standing at 86-25-1 (31 KOs). That same year he was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame.

As appraisals go, it's as high as it gets.

* * *

Cruiserweight **Antonio Tarver** became the latest boxer to test positive for a banned substance, this time the anabolic steroid drostanolone. Having Tarver's physique associated with the effects of the drug presumably caused outrage in the anabolic steroid community. ...

Fan-voters for the ESPY awards named Floyd Mayweather Jr. Fighter of the Year despite his being incarcerated. On the bright side, Floyd's acceptance speech was limited to 140 characters. ...

Dawid Kostecki's June 30 bout with Jones was canceled when the Polish light heavyweight was convicted of running a nationwide network of pimps and sentenced to 2½ years in jail. (This news item would've been so much better if he was a super flyweight.) Kostecki claims he was framed. ...

In the U.S., Polish fighter **Andrew Golota** was facing deportation after past guilty pleas over gun violations and charges of impersonating a police officer (separate incidents) came up in a background check triggered by Golota's application for citizenship. ...

British heavyweight **Tyson Fury** was pulled over by cops on his way to training camp in Holland and then, to his great surprise, arrested for murder. Apparently he and his team matched the description of some homicidal armed robbers, and so all were taken in, strip-searched and locked up. After what Fury described as "the scariest moment of my life" and 11 hours in custody, he and his team were released, with apologies. ...

Vitali Klitschko suffered a minor hand injury and the effects of tear gas when riot police in Kiev, Ukraine broke up a group of demonstrators. A leader in the ongoing opposition movement, Klitschko and about 1,000 others were protesting a law giving the Russian language more importance in official Ukrainian business. ...

Muhammad Ali was announced as the recipient of the 2012 Liberty Medal for "embracing the ideals of the Consitution — freedom, self-governance, equality and empowerment — and helping to spread them across the globe," in the words of former President Bill Clinton. Previous recipients of the honor have included several heads of state and celebrities, including **Nelson Mandela, Mikhail Gorbachev** and **Bono.** ■

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BY HEATHER SHANHOLTZ

HEIGHT: 5-foot-1
WEIGHT: 100 pounds
MEASUREMENTS: 32-24-32
STANCE: Orthodox
REACH: 22 inches
FAVORITE BOXER: Manny Pacquiao
CURRENT LOCATION: Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
WHERE YOU'VE SEEN HER: American Curves, Glam Jam Magazine, FHM Spain, MUSCLEMAG, VINCIT Magazine, Maxim en Español, Powerboating in Paradise Magazine, Rick Ross & Meek Mill: "So Sophisticated" Music Video, Hot Import Nights, Hot Miami Styles

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Danny Garcia celebrates a stunning victory that changed his career. Image: Jeff Gross-Getty Images

FIGHTER OF THE MONTH:

DANNY GARCIA

By **Michael Rosenthal**

Fighters rarely stake their claim as a major player in boxing as dramatically as Danny Garcia did on July 14 in Las Vegas.

Garcia, a significant underdog, was losing to Amir Khan when he landed the kind of left in the third round that changes the careers of everyone involved. Khan went down and was hurt badly but fought on during another several minutes of absolute mayhem in the fourth round, in which both fighters took hellacious shots.

However, Khan clearly got the worst of it. He hit the canvas twice more, after which Kenny Bayless stopped the fight to save the Briton from further punishment. Breathtaking fight, breathtaking knockout.

In the process, Garcia won the vacant RING Magazine junior welterweight championship to go with the WBC and WBA titles. That's quite a haul for a 24-year-old fighter who you have to think will only get better.

The spectacular finish had some proclaiming that "a star was born." This might or might not be be the case but one thing is certain: Anyone who witnessed that fight will never forget who Garcia is.

And this is just the start. Garcia happens to fight in a division rich in talent. The Philadelphian should have many more big fights ahead of him. ■

POUND FOR POUND: No change.

HEAVYWEIGHTS: Tony Thompson (No. 10 last month) got knocked off his feet and out of the ratings by division champion Wladimir Klitschko in six rounds; he was replaced by Cuban Odlanier Solis. Solis' stay was brief, as David Haye ended his "retirement" with a five-round pounding of Dereck Chisora (both unrated at the time) and re-claimed his spot at No. 4. That pushed everyone below him down a notch.

CRUISERWEIGHTS: No change.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: Zsolt Erdei (No. 5 last month) was dropped from the ratings due to more than a year of inactivity; Juergen Braehmer entered at No. 10.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Gentleman Glen Johnson (No. 7 last month) announced his retirement after losing a decision to unrated Andrew Fonfara in Chicago. Johnson's departure left room for Adonis Stevenson to enter at No. 10.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Cornelius Bundrage (No. 9 last month) scored a seventh-round knockout over Cory Spinks (unrated) to trade places with Alfredo Angulo (No. 8 last month). On the same card, Erislandy Lara (No. 5 last month) beat Freddy Hernandez (unrated) by unanimous decision to take the No. 4 spot from Vanes Martirosyan.

WELTERWEIGHTS: Josesito Lopez's jaw-breaking upset over Victor Ortiz (No. 3 at the time) earned him a No. 9 debut in the division and a date with Canelo Alvarez, while Ortiz fell to No. 10, pushing out Selcuk Aydin. Andre Berto (No. 3 last month) was removed following THE RING's new policy to drop fighters who test positive for banned substances. As a result, everyone below No. 3 moved up a space and Aydin returned at No. 10.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: Tim Bradley (No. 1 last month) was removed after stating he wouldn't fight again at 140 pounds, allowing everyone below him to move up a notch. That created a space at No. 10 for unbeaten Russian Khabib Allakhverdiev. Lamont Peterson (No. 1 last month) was also dropped in accordance with THE RING's drug policy. Denis Shafikov moved into the vacancy at No. 10. This also moved Amir Khan and Danny Garcia into the Nos. 1 and 2 spots, making their July 14 fight a championship bout. Garcia won by fourth-round knockout, ascending to the position of RING 140-pound champion. The Editorial Board decided to reshuffle the Top 10 below Garcia. Lucas Matthysse (No. 6 last month) landed at No. 1, Khan dropped to No. 2, Juan Manuel Marquez (No. 8 last month) advanced to No. 4 and everyone from Marcos Maidana (then at No. 7) downward moved up a notch, leaving a vacancy at No. 10 for undefeated Ajose Olusegun.

LIGHTWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: No change.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: No change.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: Yota Sato (No. 4 last month) switched places with Hugo Cazares (No. 3 last month) after easily outpointing Sylvester Lopez (unrated) in Japan.

FLYWEIGHTS: Toshiyuki Igarashi (No. 9 last month) won a hard-fought decision over Sonny Boy Jaro in Jaro's first defense of his RING belt. Igarashi became the new champion, while Jaro fell to No. 3, pushing everybody below down a notch except for No. 10 Edgar Sosa.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: No change.

STRAWWEIGHTS: Kazuto Ioka (No. 2 last month) outpointed No. 9-rated Akira Yaegashi in Japan. Ioka climbed to the No. 1 position ahead of Nkosinthai Joyi (No. 1 last month) while Yaegashi fell to the brink at No. 10, switching places with Katsunari Takayama. ■

Josesito Lopez moved into the welterweight ratings with his upset of **Victor Ortiz**. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

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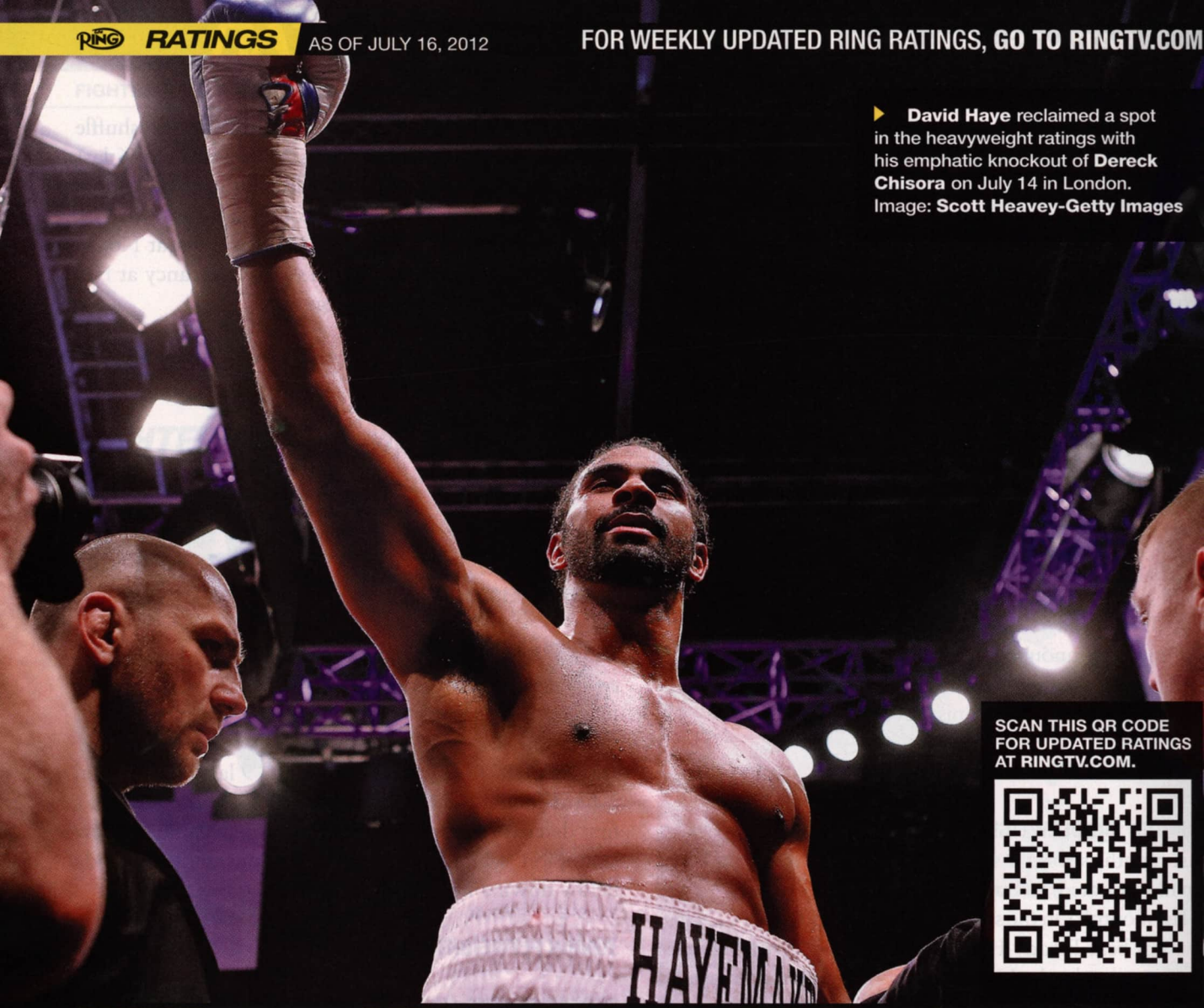

David Haye reclaimed a spot in the heavyweight ratings with his emphatic knockout of **Dereck Chisora** on July 14 in London. Image: **Scott Heavey-Getty Images**

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HEAVYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT UNLIMITED

C	**WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO**	Ukraine | 58-3-0 (51 KOs)
1.	**VITALI KLITSCHKO**	Ukraine | 44-2-0 (40 KOs)
2.	**ALEXANDER POVETKIN**	Russia | 24-0-0 (16 KOs)
3.	**TOMASZ ADAMEK**	Poland | 46-2-0 (28 KOs)
4.	**DAVID HAYE**	UK | 26-2-0 (24 KOs)
5.	**KUBRAT PULEV**	Bulgaria | 16-0-0 (8 KOs)
6.	**ROBERT HELENIUS**	Finland | 17-0-0 (11 KOs)
7.	**DENIS BOYTSOV**	Russia | 31-0-0 (25 KOs)
8.	**RUSLAN CHAGAEV**	Uzbekistan | 29-2-1 (18 KOs)
9.	**CHRIS ARREOLA**	U.S. | 35-2-0 (30 KOs)
10.	**TYSON FURY**	UK | 19-0-0 (14 KOs)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 200 LBS

C	**YOAN PABLO HERNANDEZ**	Cuba | 26-1-0 (13 KOs)
1.	**MARCO HUCK**	Germany | 34-2-1 (25 KOs)
2.	**KRZYSZTOF WLODARCZYK**	Poland | 46-2-1 (33 KOs)
3.	**STEVE CUNNINGHAM**	U.S. | 24-4-0 (12 KOs)
4.	**OLA AFOLABI**	UK | 19-2-4 (9 KOs)
5.	**DENIS LEBEDEV**	Russia | 24-1-0 (18 KOs)
6.	**ANTONIO TARVER**	U.S. | 29-6-1 (20 KOs)
7.	**GUILLERMO JONES**	Panama | 38-3-2 (30 KOs)
8.	**LATEEF KAYODE**	Nigeria | 18-0-1 (14 KOs)
9.	**GIACOBBE FRAGOMENI**	Italy | 29-3-2 (12 KOs)
10.	**MATEUSZ MASTERNAK**	Poland | 27-0-0 (20 KOs)

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 175 LBS

C	**CHAD DAWSON**	U.S. | 31-1-0 (17 KOs)
1.	**BERNARD HOPKINS**	U.S. | 52-6-2 (32 KOs)
2.	**JEAN PASCAL**	Canada | 26-2-1 (16 KOs)
3.	**TAVORIS CLOUD**	U.S. | 24-0-0 (19 KOs)
4.	**NATHAN CLEVERLY**	UK | 24-0-0 (11 KOs)
5.	**GABRIEL CAMPILLO**	Spain | 21-4-1 (8 KOs)
6.	**BEIBUT SHUMENOV**	Kazakhstan | 13-1-0 (8 KOs)
7.	**KARO MURAT**	Germany | 25-1-1 (15 KOs)
8.	**MIKKEL KESSLER**	Denmark | 45-2-0 (34 KOs)
9.	**ISAAC CHILEMBA**	Malawi | 19-1-1 (9 KOs)
10.	**JUERGEN BRAEHMER**	Germany | 38-2-0 (30 KOs)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 168 LBS

C	**ANDRE WARD**	U.S. | 25-0-0 (13 KOs)
1.	**CARL FROCH**	UK | 29-2-0 (21 KOs)
2.	**ROBERT STIEGLITZ**	Russia | 42-2-0 (23 KOs)
3.	**LUCIAN BUTE**	Romania | 30-1-0 (24 KOs)
4.	**THOMAS OOSTHUIZEN**	South Africa | 19-0-1 (13 KOs)
5.	**SAKIO BIKA**	Cameroon | 30-5-2 (21 KOs)
6.	**GEORGE GROVES**	UK | 14-0-0 (11 KOs)
7.	**ANDRE DIRRELL**	U.S. | 20-1-0 (14 KOs)
8.	**ARTHUR ABRAHAM**	Armenia | 34-3-0 (27 KOs)
9.	**EDWIN RODRIGUEZ**	Dominican Rep. | 21-0-0 (14 KOs)
10.	**ADONIS STEVENSON**	Canada | 18-1-0 (15 KOs)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 160 LBS

C **SERGIO MARTINEZ**
Argentina | 49-2-2 (28 KOs)

1. **FELIX STURM**
Germany | 37-2-2 (16 KOs)
2. **DANIEL GEALE**
Australia | 27-1-0 (15 KOs)
3. **JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ JR.**
Mexico | 46-0-1 (32 KOs)
4. **DMITRY PIROG**
Russia | 20-0-0 (15 KOs)
5. **HASSAN N'DAM N'JIKAM**
France | 27-0-0 (17 KOs)
6. **MATTHEW MACKLIN**
UK | 28-4-0 (19 KOs)
7. **MARTIN MURRAY**
UK | 24-0-1 (10 KOs)
8. **GENNADY GOLOVKIN**
Kazakhstan | 23-0-0 (20 KOs)
9. **GRZEGORZ PROKSA**
Poland | 28-1-0 (21 KOs)
10. **PETER QUILLIN**
U.S. | 27-0-0 (20 KOs)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 154 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.**
U.S. | 43-0-0 (26 KOs)
2. **MIGUEL COTTO**
Puerto Rico | 37-3-0 (30 KOs)
3. **SAUL ALVAREZ**
Mexico | 40-0-1 (29 KOs)
4. **ERISLANDY LARA**
Cuba | 17-1-1 (11 KOs)
5. **VANES MARTIROSYAN**
U.S. | 32-0-0 (20 KOs)
6. **CARLOS MOLINA**
Mexico | 19-5-2 (6 KOs)
7. **JAMES KIRKLAND**
U.S. | 31-1-0 (27 KOs)
8. **CORNELIUS BUNDRAGE**
U.S. | 32-4-0 (19 KOs)
9. **ALFREDO ANGULO**
Mexico | 20-2-0 (17 KOs)
10. **AUSTIN TROUT**
U.S. | 25-0-0 (14 KOs)

WELTERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 147 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
Philippines | 54-4-2 (38 KOs)
2. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.**
U.S. | 43-0-0 (26 KOs)
3. **KELL BROOK**
UK | 28-0-0 (18 KOs)
4. **PAULIE MALIGNAGGI**
U.S. | 31-4-0 (7 KOs)
5. **JAN ZAVECK**
Slovenia | 32-2-0 (18 KOs)
6. **TIMOTHY BRADLEY**
U.S. | 29-0-0 (12 KOs)
7. **RANDALL BAILEY**
U.S. | 43-7-0 (37 KOs)
8. **JOSESITO LOPEZ**
U.S. | 30-4-0 (18 KOs)
9. **VICTOR ORTIZ**
U.S. | 29-4-2 (22 KOs)
10. **SELCUK AYDIN**
Turkey | 23-0-0 (17 KOs)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 140 LBS

C **DANNY GARCIA**
U.S. | 24-0-0 (15 KOs)

1. **LUCAS MATTHYSSE**
Argentina | 31-2-0 (29 KOs)
2. **AMIR KHAN**
UK | 26-3-0 (18 KOs)
3. **ZAB JUDAH**
U.S. | 42-7-0 (29 KOs)
4. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico | 54-6-1 (39 KOs)
5. **MIKE ALVARADO**
U.S. | 33-0-0 (23 KOs)
6. **MARCOS MAIDANA**
Argentina | 31-3-0 (28 KOs)
7. **ERIK MORALES**
Mexico | 52-8-0 (36 KOs)
8. **KHABIB ALLAKHVERDIEV**
Russia | 17-0-0 (8 KOs)
9. **DENIS SHAFIKOV**
Russia | 29-0-1 (17 KOs)
10. **AJOSE OLUSEGUN**
Nigeria | 30-0-0 (14 KOs)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 135 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **ANTONIO DEMARCO**
Mexico | 27-2-1 (20 KOs)
2. **MIGUEL VAZQUEZ**
Mexico | 31-3-0 (13 KOs)
3. **RICKY BURNS**
UK | 34-2-0 (9 KOs)
4. **KEVIN MITCHELL**
UK | 33-1-0 (24 KOs)
5. **JOHN MURRAY**
UK | 31-2-0 (18 KOs)
6. **JOHN MOLINA**
U.S. | 24-1-0 (19 KOs)
7. **RICHARD ABRIL**
Cuba | 17-3-1 (8 KOs)
8. **HANK LUNDY**
U.S. 22-1-1 (11 KOs)
9. **GAVIN REES**
UK | 37-1-1 (18 KOs)
10. **SHARIF BOGERE**
Uganda | 23-0-0 (15 KOs)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 130 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **TAKASHI UCHIYAMA**
Japan | 18-0-1 (15 KOs)
2. **JUAN CARLOS SALGADO**
Mexico | 25-1-1 (16 KOs)
3. **ADRIEN BRONER**
U.S. 23-0-0 (19 KOs)
4. **TAKAHIRO AO**
Japan | 23-2-1 (10 KOs)
5. **ROMAN MARTINEZ**
Puerto Rico | 25-1-1 (16 KOs)
6. **DIEGO MAGDALENO**
U.S. | 22-0-0 (8 KOs)
7. **ARGENIS MENDEZ**
Dominican Rep. | 19-2-0 (10 KOs)
8. **JUAN CARLOS BURGOS**
Mexico | 29-1-0 (19 KOs)
9. **JORGE SOLIS**
Mexico | 40-4-2 (29 KOs)
10. **JAVIER FORTUNA**
Dominican Rep. | 20-0-0 (15 KOs)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 126 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **YURIORKIS GAMBOA**
Cuba | 21-0-0 (16 KOs)
2. **ORLANDO SALIDO**
Mexico | 38-11-2 (26 KOs)
3. **CHRIS JOHN**
Indonesia | 47-0-2 (22 KOs)
4. **JHONNY GONZALEZ**
Mexico | 52-7-0 (45 KOs)
5. **MIKEY GARCIA**
U.S. | 28-0-0 (24 KOs)
6. **BILLY DIB**
Australia | 35-1-0 (21 KOs)
7. **JUAN MANUEL LOPEZ**
Puerto Rico | 31-2-0 (28 KOs)
8. **DANIEL PONCE DE LEON**
Mexico | 43-4-0 (35 KOs)
9. **CELESTINO CABALLERO**
Panama | 36-4-0 (23 KOs)
10. **HOZUMI HASEGAWA**
Japan | 30-4-0 (13 KOs)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 122 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **TOSHIAKI NISHIOKA**
Japan | 39-4-3 (24 KOs)
2. **GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX**
Cuba | 10-0-0 (8 KOs)
3. **NONITO DONAIRE**
Philippines | 29-1-0 (18 KOs)
4. **AKIFUMA SHIMODA**
Japan | 25-3-1 (11 KOs)
5. **P. KRATINGDAENGGYM**
Thailand | 47-2-0 (33 KOs)
6. **JEFFREY MATHEBULA**
South Africa | 26-4-2 (14 KOs)
7. **ABNER MARES**
U.S. | 24-0-1 (13 KOs)
8. **TAKALANI NDLOVU**
South Africa | 33-7-0 (18 KOs)
9. **STEVE MOLITOR**
Canada | 34-2-0 (12 KOs)
10. **RICO RAMOS**
U.S. | 21-1-0 (11 KOs)

HOW OUR RATINGS ARE COMPILED

Championship vacancies can be filled in the following two ways: 1. THE RING's Nos. 1 and 2 contenders fight one another; 2. If the Nos. 1 and 2 contenders chose not to fight one another and either of them fights No. 3, No. 4 or No. 5, the winner may be awarded THE RING belt if the Editorial Board deems the contenders worthy.

A champion can lose his belt in six situations: 1. The Champion loses a fight in the weight class in which he is champion; 2. The Champion moves to another weight class; 3. The Champion does not schedule a fight in any weight class for 18 months; 4. The Champion does not schedule a fight at his championship weight for 18 months (even if he fights at another weight); 5. The Champion does not schedule a fight with a Top-5 contender from any weight class for two years; 6. The Champion retires.

THE RING Ratings are compiled by the magazine's Editorial Board, with the participation of THE RING Ratings Panel of boxing journalists from around the world. To see the complete list of our panelists, click on RATINGS at RingTV.com.

Records provided by boxrec.com

BANTAMWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 118 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **ANSELMO MORENO**
Panama | 33-1-1 (12 KOs)
2. **JOSEPH AGBEKO**
Ghana | 28-4-0 (22 KOs)
3. **SHINSUKE YAMANAKA**
Japan | 16-0-2 (11 KOs)
4. **KOKI KAMEDA**
Japan | 28-1-0 (17 KOs)
5. **ERIC MOREL**
U.S. | 46-3-0 (23 KOs)
6. **MALCOLM TUNACAO**
Philippines | 30-2-3 (19 KOs)
7. **LEO SANTA CRUZ**
Mexico | 20-0-1 (11 KOs)
8. **VIC DARCHINYAN**
Armenia | 37-5-1 (27 KOs)
9. **JORGE ARCE**
Mexico | 60-6-2 (46 KOs)
10. **HUGO RUIZ**
Mexico | 31-1-0 (28 KOs)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 115 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **OMAR NARVAEZ**
Argentina | 36-1-2 (19 KOs)
2. **TEPPARITH SINGWANCHA**
Thailand | 20-2-0 (13 KOs)
3. **YOTA SATO**
Japan | 25-2-1 (12 KOs)
4. **HUGO CAZARES**
Mexico | 36-7-2 (26 KOs)
5. **SURIYAN SOR RUNGVISAI**
Thailand | 20-5-1 (7 KOs)
6. **TOMONOBU SHIMIZU**
Japan | 19-4-1 (9 KOs)
7. **JUAN CARLOS SANCHEZ**
Mexico | 14-1-1 (7 KOs)
8. **NOBUO NASHIRO**
Japan | 18-4-1 (12 KOs)
9. **CARLOS CUADRAS**
Mexico | 25-0-0 (21 KOs)
10. **RODEL MAYOL**
Philippines | 31-5-2 (22 KOs)

FLYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 112 LBS

C **TOSHIYUKI IGARASHI**
Japan | 16-1-1 (10 KOs)

1. **HERNAN MARQUEZ**
Mexico | 34-2-0 (25 KOs)
2. **BRIAN VILORIA**
U.S. | 31-3-0 (18 KOs)
3. **SONNY BOY JARO**
Philippines | 34-11-5 (24 KOs)
4. **MORUTI MTHALANE**
S. Africa | 28-2-0 (19 KOs)
5. **MILAN MELINDO**
Philippines | 27-0-0 (11 KOs)
6. **PONGSAKLEK WONJONGKAM**
Thailand | 83-4-2 (44 KOs)
7. **ROCKY FUENTES**
Philippines | 33-6-2 (20 KOs)
8. **JUAN CARLOS REVECO**
Argentina | 28-1-0 (16 KOs)
9. **LUIS CONCEPCION**
Panama | 25-3-0 (20 KOs)
10. **EDGAR SOSA**
Mexico | 45-7-0 (27 KOs)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 108 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **ROMAN GONZALEZ**
Nicaragua | 32-0-0 (27 KOs)
2. **ULISES SOLIS**
Mexico | 34-2-3 (21 KOs)
3. **DONNIE NIETES**
Philippines | 30-1-3 (16 KOs)
4. **K. PORPRAMOOK**
Thailand | 45-3-0 (30 KOs)
5. **MASAYUKI KURODA**
Japan | 21-3-1 (13 KOs)
6. **ADRIAN HERNANDEZ**
Mexico | 23-2-1 (15 KOs)
7. **RYO MIYAZAKI**
Japan | 17-0-3 (10 KOs)
8. **JOHNRIEL CASIMERO**
Philippines | 16-2-0 (10 KOs)
9. **LUIS CEJA**
Mexico | 22-1-3 (18 KOs)
10. **RYOICHI TAGUCHI**
Japan | 16-1-1 (7 KOs)

STRAWWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 105 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **KAZUTO IOKA**
Japan | 10-0-0 (6 KOs)
2. **NKOSINATHI JOYI**
South Africa | 22-0-0 (15 KOs)
3. **MOISES FUENTES**
Mexico | 15-1-0 (7 KOs)
4. **RAUL GARCIA**
Mexico | 32-2-1 (20 KOs)
5. **DENVER CUELLO**
Philippines | 31-4-6 (21 KOs)
6. **WANHENG MENAYOTHIN**
Thailand | 23-0-0 (7 KOs)
7. **JUAN PALACIOS**
Nicaragua | 29-3-1 (22 KOs)
8. **FLORANTE CONDES**
Philippines | 25-6-1 (21 KOs)
9. **KATSUNARI TAKAYAMA**
Japan | 24-5-0 (10 KOs)
10. **AKIRA YAEGASHI**
Japan | 15-3-0 (8 KOs)

POUND FOR POUND

***NOTE:** The No. 1 position is vacant.*

2. **MANNY PACQUIAO** (TIE)
Philippines | 54-4-2 (38 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT
2. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR** (TIE)
U.S. | 43-0-0 (26 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT
3. **SERGIO MARTINEZ**
Argentina | 49-2-2 (28 KOs) | MIDDLEWEIGHT
4. **NONITO DONAIRE**
Philippines | 29-1-0 (18 KOs) | JR. FEATHERWEIGHT
5. **ANDRE WARD**
U.S. | 25-0-0 (13 KOs) | SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT
6. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico | 54-6-1 (39 KOs) | JR. WELTERWEIGHT
7. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO**
Ukraine | 58-3-0 (51 KOs) | HEAVYWEIGHT
8. **TIMOTHY BRADLEY**
U.S. | 29-0-0 (12 KOs) | JR. WELTERWEIGHT
9. **VITALI KLITSCHKO**
Ukraine | 44-2-0 (40 KOs) | HEAVYWEIGHT
10. **CHAD DAWSON**
U.S. | 31-1-0 (17 KOs) | LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT

Image: Harry How-Getty

THE RING POLICY ON RATED BOXERS WHO TEST POSITIVE FOR BANNED SUBSTANCES

THE RING will remove from its ratings any rated boxer — including a champion — if such boxer at some point undergoes drug testing (Olympic-style or otherwise) and that boxer tests positve for a banned substance.

In the event that a boxer has undergone testing in which the boxer provides two samples ("A" and "B") and the boxer's "A" and subsequent "B" samples test positive for a banned substance or if his "A" sample tests positive and he waives his right to have the "B" sample tested then the boxer shall immediately be removed from the ratings.

A boxer whose "A" sample tested positive and is awaiting the results of his "B" sample will not be allowed to fight for a championship or rise in the ratings. A boxer who is removed because of a postitive test will have the opportunity to earn his way back into the ratings after any suspension period is completed.

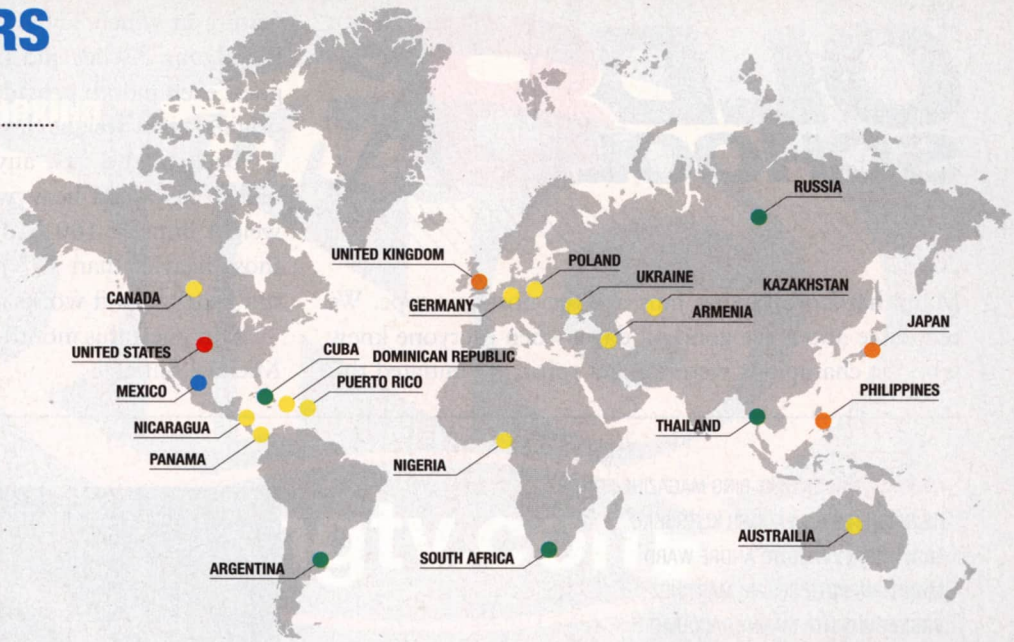
A boxer who is dropped also may be reinstated if the testing agency subsequently reverses its decision or a court of competent jursidiction finds that the test result was invalid.

RATED FIGHTERS BY COUNTRY

UNITED STATES	32*
MEXICO	27
JAPAN	17
UNITED KINGDOM	14
PHILIPPINES	11
RUSSIA	7
THAILAND	6
ARGENTINA	5
CUBA	5
SOUTH AFRICA	5
GERMANY	4
PANAMA	4
POLAND	4
CANADA	3
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	3
PUERTO RICO	3
ARMENIA	2
AUSTRALIA	2
KAZAKHSTAN	2
NICARAGUA	2
NIGERIA	2
UKRAINE	2
BULGARIA	1
CAMEROON	1
DENMARK	1
FINLAND	1
FRANCE	1
GHANA	1
INDONESIA	1
ITALY	1
MALAWI	1
ROMANIA	1
SLOVENIA	1
SPAIN	1
TURKEY	1
UGANDA	1
UZBEKISTAN	1

*Includes two ratings for Floyd Mayweather Jr. (junior middleweight, welterweight)

NOTE: *The country of fighters who have spent large portions of their lives in two countries was determined primarily by where they spent the bulk of their childhood.*



ENGLISH VS. SPANISH

This item doesn't pit England against Spain. Rather, it's the English-speaking world vs. the Spanish-speaking world in terms of the number of rated fighters each one can claim. Engish or Spanish are official or de facto languages of these countries. ***Note:*** *Some have more than one official language. Canada and the Philippines are examples.*

DIVISION	ENGLISH	SPANISH
HEAVYWEIGHTS	3	0
CRUISERWEIGHTS	4	2
LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS	7	1
SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	6	1
MIDDLEWEIGHTS	4	2
JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS	5	5
WELTERWEIGHTS	8	0
JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS	5	4
LIGHTWEIGHTS	7	3
JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS	2	6
FEATHERWEIGHTS	2	6
JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS	6	1
BANTAMWEIGHTS	3	4
JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS	1	4
FLYWEIGHTS	5	4
JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS	2	4
STRAWWEIGHTS	3	3
TOTAL	**72**	**50**

HERE'S THE BREAKDOWN BY LANGUAGE:

ENGLISH – United States 32, United Kingdom 14, Philippines 11, South Africa 5, Canada 3, Australia 2, Nigeria 2, Cameroon 1, Ghana 1, Malawi 1, Uganda 1.

SPANISH – Mexico 27, Argentina 5, Cuba 5, Panama 4, Dominican Republic 3, Puerto Rico 3, Nicaragua 2, Spain 1.

Cruiserweight **Guillermo Jones**, 40. Image: **Fightwireimages**

DIVISIONS BY AGE

The average age of the fighters rated by THE RING in each weight class.

DIVISION	AVG. AGE
POUND FOR POUND	33.5
HEAVYWEIGHT	31.5
CRUISERWEIGHT	33.1
LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT	31
SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT	29.8
MIDDLEWEIGHT	30.2
JR. MIDDLEWEIGHT	29.4
WELTERWEIGHT	30.7
JR. WELTERWEIGHT	30.4
LIGHTWEIGHT	27.5
JR. LIGHTWEIGHT	26.9
FEATHERWEIGHT	30.1
JR. FEATHERWEIGHT	30.4
BANTAMWEIGHT	30
JR. BANTAMWEIGHT	28
FLYWEIGHT	28.3
JR. FLYWEIGHT	25.7
STRAWWEIGHT	27.9

OLD SCHOOL 8

Many hardcore boxing fans are the nostalgic type. We reminisce about the good ol' days, when everyone knew who the champions were. In that spirit, we initiated this feature in which THE RING staffers – Michael Rosenthal, Doug Fischer and Lem Satterfield – and a different guest each month provide their current champions in the original eight weight classes.

Back in the day, anyone heavier than 175 pounds had to fight as a heavyweight, fighters over the middleweight limit of 160 had to fight as light heavyweights, those heavier than 147 fought as middleweights and so on. That's how it works in our new feature.

Our guest this month is Hall of Famer ring announcer Michael Buffer.

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LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT: ANDRE WARD
MIDDLEWEIGHT: SERGIO MARTINEZ
WELTERWEIGHT: MANNY PACQUIAO
LIGHTWEIGHT: ADRIEN BRONER
FEATHERWEIGHT: YURIORKIS GAMBOA
BANTAMWEIGHT: ANSELMO MORENO
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FEATHERWEIGHT: YURIORKIS GAMBOA
BANTAMWEIGHT: ANSELMO MORENO
FLYWEIGHT: ROMAN GONZALEZ

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LIGHTWEIGHT: MIGUEL VAZQUEZ
FEATHERWEIGHT: YURIORKIS GAMBOA
BANTAMWEIGHT: ANSELMO MORENO
FLYWEIGHT: BRIAN VILORIA

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WELTERWEIGHT: FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.
LIGHTWEIGHT: ADRIEN BRONER
FEATHERWEIGHT: NONITO DONAIRE
BANTAMWEIGHT: KOKI KAMEDA
FLYWEIGHT: HERNAN MARQUEZ

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DOUBLE TROUBLE

SEPT. 15 IS A BIG NIGHT OF BOXING BUT THE FACT THAT CHAVEZ-MARTINEZ AND ALVAREZ-LOPEZ OVERLAP ISN'T GOOD FOR THE SPORT

By **Ron Borges**

The National Football League may well be the most successful sports brand ever created. Certainly it is the most universally popular and financially powerful endeavor in the history of American sport. Yet for all its success it would never try doing what boxing's two biggest promoters and two largest television broadcasting partners are planning for Sept. 15.

For all the NFL's success, it would never counter program against itself. Why? Because it's bad business and bad for its fans. Part of the NFL's genius since the days when Bert Bell was commissioner in the 1940s and 50s has been that the league never competed against itself. It's why the NFL still blacks out within 75 miles of games not sold out within 72 hours of kickoff. It's why it doesn't beam a competing televised game into a franchise city at the same time the local team is playing unless you pay extra to buy a cable package that gives you all the games and even then you need DirectTV to get it, which the bulk of cable homes do not have.

Maybe Bob Arum and Richard Schaefer should think about that? The respective new leaders of HBO Sports and Showtime — Ken Hershman and Stephen Espinoza — certainly should, because if either of them believes they know more about marketing their sport than the National Football League knows about selling football, they are, to be kind, delusional.

This is not the first time rival boxing promoters and rival cable networks have done this. In fact, there was a time when HBO and Showtime did it all too regularly until both concluded, during the era when Lou DiBella was running the day-to-day boxing operation at HBO Sports and the late Jay Larkin was doing the same at Showtime, that this was not only lunacy but also bad business.

"When I was at HBO, Larkin and I seldom had a problem with dueling dates," said DiBella, who will co-promote with Arum middleweight champion Sergio Martinez's much-anticipated unification showdown against Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. on HBO Pay-Per-View on the same evening Schaefer's company will stage popular Mexican star Saul "Canelo" Alvarez's junior middleweight title defense against Josesito Lopez on Showtime. Those fights, both of particular interest to the Hispanic fight fan who has become the bedrock of the sport's popularity in the U.S., not only will be televised on the same night, they'll also be staged barely two miles from each other in Las Vegas: one at the MGM Grand Garden Arena and the other at the Thomas & Mack Center on the campus of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. That's like having the Jets and Giants both playing home games at the same time.

"Jay and I talked once a month about our scheduling," DiBella said. "We chatted regularly. How is it to anyone's advantage to split the fan base like this? Boxing's fan base is not growing as it is. We're all fishing in the same water from the same school of fish. There's no upside to this. Once (Victor) Ortiz [Alvarez's third scheduled opponent before Lopez finally got the slot in mid-July] lost, Golden Boy should have said, 'we lost the battle' and moved to another date."

Certainly it would have made life easier for boxing's customers, who love to watch the sport live and will be keenly interested in both a rising star like Alvarez and the showdown between Martinez and Chavez Jr.

HEAD TO HEAD

CHAVEZ-MARTINEZ		ALVAREZ-LOPEZ
SEPT. 15	DATE	SEPT. 15
LAS VEGAS	CITY	LAS VEGAS
THOMAS & MACK CENTER	VENUE	MGM GRAND
HBO PAY-PER-VIEW	TV	SHOWTIME
6 P.M. PT / 9 P.M. ET	TV TIME	6 P.M. PT / 9 P.M. ET
MIDDLEWEIGHT	DIVISION	JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHT
RING/WBC TITLES	AT STAKE	WBC TITLE

Bob Arum, Julio Cesar Chavez Jr.'s promoter, acknowledged that "the fans are the losers" as a result of the competing promotions. Image: **Chris Cozzone**

Watching a week later, as will be possible when HBO re-broadcasts Martinez-Chavez the following weekend as it always does with its PPV shows, is simply not the same experience once you know the outcome. Neither is recording Alvarez's fight on TiVo or DVR unless you exist in a news blackout and don't know the result.

Even Schaefer, Golden Boy Promotions' president and CEO, admitted in an ideal world dueling promotions are less than ideal before quite rightly pointing out that the boxing business is far from an ideal world to do business in.

"If I said it's good I'd be lying," Schaefer said. "It certainly is not good for the sport or our customers. But Mexican Independence Day is an important date for our network partners and our corporate partners. Top Rank may say the same. So sometimes you'll have these dueling situations.

"Clearly it's not an ideal situation but it's not the end of the sport either. It's not the end of the sport having corporate America interested in both events. The largest beer company in the world, Tecate, is promoting our event.

"We have MGM, they have Wynn [casinos supporting the two cards]. It's good that corporate America is embracing the sport and two big events in one night."

That's one way to look at it, yet would they not have had the same sponsors if the events were a month apart and fight fans could have watched both events without having to choose one over the other? Although the two agree on few things, even Arum couldn't argue with Schaefer on that … although that didn't last for long.

"I agree," Arum said. "The fans are the losers, but it's a net positive for Las Vegas. All the casinos are buying tickets. We're going on pay-per-view. They didn't even have a fight until the middle of July! What this means is now when Showtime has a pay-per-view event HBO has incentive to program against them.

"Nobody wants this. It's stupid. Golden Boy rolled the dice and lost. What they should have done is wait for (James) Kirkland to be ready to fight (Alvarez) in October. But I couldn't care less what they do. We have a very strong fight. People have been talking about it for a year. People kept saying Chavez was ducking Martinez, which was true. He wasn't ready. Now he is. It's the biggest fight out there and we have it.

"We didn't step on anybody's date. If anything they stepped on our date without having a fight. It's not true that we're counter programming. They didn't even have a program until July 12. We had the date first."

That, like most things in boxing, is partly true and partly debatable. Arum did indeed reserve the date with the top cable operators in February but the fact is at the time he didn't have a fight either. Converse-

Golden Boy Promotions CEO **Richard Schaefer** also said dueling promotions are less than ideal but added that they are sometimes unavoidable. Image: **Ethan Miller-Getty Images**

ly, Golden Boy booked the arena first and alerted the Nevada State Athletic Commission, which oversees boxing in the state, it would stage a show on Sept. 15 before Arum did also without having a finalized fight, Schaefer claiming he was unaware at the time that Top Rank was also planning an event that night.

"How could you hold a date (with the major cable distributors) for an event you didn't even know would happen?" Schaefer asked.

Again, though, GBP didn't have a fight either. So there you go.

GBP originally planned for former middleweight champion Paul Williams to be Alvarez's opponent but that fell out when he was tragically injured in a motorcycle crash in Atlanta. Then Kirkland accepted the fight but rejected it a day later complaining about the purse. Then Ortiz was set to face Alvarez in what would have been a concussive confrontation of great interest to fight fans, only for Ortiz to be upset in a tune-up fight that went out of tune after Lopez broke Ortiz's jaw and he quit on his stool.

That is how Lopez ended up facing Alvarez in a match Golden Boy initially hoped it might be able to get on CBS, according to industry and television sources familiar with the situation. That would have been a major coup because it would have put their fight on free TV against a premium-priced pay-per-view event. Network television remains a far bigger universe of viewers than premium cable. And CBS had not been in the live fight business for more than two decades, so had it happened it would have been a major breakthrough for GBP. In the end it didn't happen – although CBS owns Showtime and will be involved in promoting the event – so the result is fight fans eager to see Alvarez's latest junior middleweight title defense, albeit against a guy who has fought only once above junior welterweight, will have to decide if that is more important than a much-anticipated middleweight title fight between the two biggest names in the division and two of the biggest in the sport.

Why ask your customers to do something the NFL wouldn't ask of its customers? That's where the blindness caused by petty rivalry and business warfare come in, two things that have plagued the sport of boxing for decades, maybe even dating back to the bare-knuckle days of John L. Sullivan. Certainly that seems to be what promoting has become over the past 40 years: a bare knuckle fight within the fight that often has not served the sport very well.

Many in boxing believe the fan was once again the last person considered as the 80-year-old Arum battles to hold onto his place at or near the top rung of boxing while

Golden Boy's 12-year-old company has become his greatest rival since the days when Don King was, well, King. In those days King and Arum were regularly involved in internecine battles of fits and wits, at times staging fights at similar times while scheming to steal each other's fighters or knocking each other's promotions.

King was for decades Arum's bitterest rival. The two once nearly came to blows when King tried to enter the ring at an Arum promotion. Another time an Arum employee pulled the plug to shut off a microphone King was using during a post-fight press conference to gloat about his fighter's victory over Arum's. For all the business animus between Arum and Golden Boy these days, it has never come to that, but Arum has kinder words for his fading old rival than for his vibrant new one.

"King is a professional," Arum said. "King and I swung everything at each other but when it came to doing a fight we did the fight and I have to say King was always a professional."

Asked whether he could say the same about Golden Boy, a company that in only its sixth year of existence (2006) shattered the pay-per-view record with a fight between company founder Oscar De La Hoya and Floyd Mayweather Jr., Arum snapped: "Absolutely not!"

"We do our business. We put on great shows. We have a great fight that will do 14,000 at the gate and well on pay-per-view. We don't really want anything to do with them."

Arum claims Espinoza, who was formerly GBP's chief counsel, now functions as little more than a plant at Showtime since taking over earlier this year. He insists Espinoza has banned Top Rank fighters from Showtime, a charge Espinoza denied recently when he told MaxBoxing.com, "We tend to do business with people who are good partners for the networks. Given the choices Top Rank has made lately and the public statements Top Rank has recently been making, they're not good partners."

Espinoza went on to admit being angry that Martinez-Chavez will be on pay-per-view the same night Showtime televises Alvarez-Lopez and an interesting all-Mexican featherweight title fight between Jhonny Gonzalez and ex-junior featherweight knockout artist Daniel Ponce de Leon, but insisted "nobody's phone number is blocked."

However, many boxing insiders believe Arum's charges, just as they once insisted Golden Boy was running HBO Boxing rather than the other way around. The one guy who didn't see it that way was King, who said of GBP, "They're doing what any of us would do. They got leverage and they're using it. Is it good for boxing? Probably not, but that's not their business.

Golden Boy and **Top Rank** were able to work together on big-money shows in the past but things have changed. Image: **Ed Mulholland-Fightwireimages**

There's a lot of jealousy in boxing. It's why I don't deal with none of 'em. I put on my own shows."

Yet Schaefer, who runs the day to day promotional business for De La Hoya and is, with De La Hoya's approval, the architect of the company's promotional planning and direction, seems to have grown weary of dealing with Arum, who has been lobbing oratorical bombshells GBP's way in the same fashion he used to attack King back in the old days of their bombastic battles.

"The fact is they had the date on the pay-per-view side but on the site side there's no question we had it first," Schaefer said. "Why do they need to go to the Thomas & Mack Center, where nobody likes to go for a fight? It's bad will. I won't let Top Rank dictate what we'll do. Arum has gotten away with bullying people around for 46 years. We are the future. He is the past.

"I'm so sick and tired of talking about that old .... I have no interest in talking with him anymore. We have tried many times to do business with him and to talk about our business problems. It is always the same.

"When we had an output deal with HBO that wasn't good for boxing. If we work with Showtime it's not good. I am so over this guy. We've decided we are

going about our business. We have by far – by far! – the best stable of fighters in the world. We put them in meaningful fights. We couldn't care less any more if he wants to co-promote or not.

"About a year ago we had a mediation in front of a retired judge. We shook hands. I thought let's give it another try. I really thought we would. We tried it this way. We tried it that way. What became apparent is Bob only accepts his way. It's Bob's way or the highway. Everyone else has to walk behind him like a little dog. That's not who we are.

"Our company wants to see the best fight the best. I want to make those fights. Does Arum want to make those fights? If Arum wants to make his fighters great, putting them in with our fighters, great. If not, that's great, too. We'll do over 100 televised events (including on Spanish television). Top Rank is next at 20 or 25. If I was worrying about what other promoters do or say, it would drive me nuts. We're happy with where we are. In the 10 years I've been involved in boxing I've never been as excited with our business as I am today.

"We've been involved in 75 to 80 percent of the biggest fights in the last 10 years. I'm not making that up. We've done the second biggest heavyweight (PPV) show and the biggest non-heavyweight show. We're leaders, not followers, but we also know everyone in boxing can bring things to the table. Bob doesn't believe that.

"After a while you have to realize it's not going to work. This is a person we cannot work with. He always needs somebody to fight with. A year ago he was ridiculing HBO. Now he calls Showtime a secondary network. This is not the first time Arum is doing these things but it's the last time. He's had his time. He's just a desperate, miserable old guy trying to hold on."

Whether that's true or not, Bob Arum also remains one of the two most powerful promoters in boxing. As long as he controls the careers of fighters like Chavez, Manny Pacquiao, Nonito Donaire, Tim Bradley, Brandon Rios and Guillermo Rigondeaux, he will remain considerably more than someone desperately trying to hold on. He will remain a thorn in the side of Richard Schaefer and Schaefer will serve the same role for Arum.

Who will most often feel the pain of that?

Fight fans. ■

Image: Latin Content-Getty Images

Saul "Canelo" Alvarez has experienced the adulation of an adoring crowd while in possession of the green belt ...

PARALLEL WORLDS

JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ JR. AND CANELO ALVAREZ HAVE FOLLOWED A SIMILAR ROAD TO STARDOM

By **Norm Frauenheim**

Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. and Saul "Canelo" Alvarez have been circling each other like wary predators tied together by national pride, a common language and maybe even the same neighborhood for at least a few days. With plans for competing cards in Las Vegas, only a couple of miles would separate them on Sept. 15 – Chavez vs. Sergio Martinez at Thomas & Mack Center and Canelo vs. Josesito Lopez at the MGM Grand.

It's one way to celebrate the Sept. 16th anniversary of Mexican Independence. Fans would be free to buy one or the other in perhaps the biggest vote since Mexico's presidential election on a night when promoters would look as if they had declared independence from good business sense. A better way, the money-making way, would be a fight between them.

But what sounds so simple just isn't anymore. Ties that bind have spawned complications, all of which have Chavez and Canelo seemingly trapped in a rivalry without an immediate resolution. That road work between Thomas & Mack and the MGM Grand might be the closest they get to sharing a ring in the foreseeable future.

How they reached this dilemma is crisscrossed by the toxic feud between their respective promoters. In Chavez's corner, there is Top Rank. In Canelo's corner, there is Golden Boy. Between them, there is bitter argument, an exasperated public and a standoff that starts with Manny Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather Jr., the other fight the world has yet to see.

CHAVEZ-ALVAREZ TIMELINE

A look at the milestones in the careers of Chavez **(46-0-1, 32 KOs)** and Saul "Canelo" Alvarez **(40-0-1, 29 KOs)**

BORN
Chavez - Feb. 16, 1986 (Culican, Sinaloa, Mexico)
Alvarez - July 18, 1990, (Tlajomulco de Zúñiga, Jalisco, Mexico)

JOINED CURRENT PROMOTER
Chavez - 2003 (Top Rank; before he turned pro)
Alvarez - Jan. 23, 2010 (Golden Boy)

PRO DEBUT
Chavez - Sept. 26, 2003 (vs. Jonathan Hernandez)
Alvarez - Oct. 29, 2005 (vs. Abraham Gonzalez)

FIRST U.S. FIGHT
Chavez - Dec. 5, 2003 (vs. Gerardo Penaflor; third fight)
Alvarez - Oct. 24, 2008 (vs. Larry Mosley; 23rd fight)

The escalating exchange of insults is well-documented. The scale is a lot less subjective. The 26-year-old Chavez is growing rapidly into a fighter with a middleweight title, yet is as big as a light heavyweight at opening bell. That leverage might be his best chance against the agile, athletic Martinez and it helps explain why Canelo, a junior-middleweight, won't fight Chavez any time soon.

Yet, the tantalizing prospect is still there, in part because Canelo, 22, appears to have a body built to take on more pounds and mostly because of biographies — so-called back stories — that point to, if not demand, a dramatic conclusion.

Chavez has the lineage, the name of his legendary dad. It's a heavy crown, worn like an unwanted hand-me-down early in early in Chavez's career. He fought because that was the family trade. Despite his years of growing up around the ring, however, he lacked any significant amateur experience. As he nears 30, he might just be discovering some innate instinct.

In the couple of years since trainer Freddie Roach moved into his corner, Chavez Jr. has begun to fight as though he inherited more than just a name. Junior might have some of his dad's toughness, too.

"I believe that at this stage of my career, I am putting it all together," Chavez said in June before he bullied, pushed and pounded former Irish Olympian Andy Lee around an El Paso ring for a seventh-round TKO with a collection of body shots straight out of his dad's arsenal. "I now have the experience to deal with everything that might happen in the ring."

... and so has rival Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. Image **Naoki Fukuda**

On the flip side, there's Canelo, who wears a crown of red hair that some believe is his inheritance from Los Patricios, soldiers of Irish descent who fought for Mexico during the Mexican-American War. Canelo fought kids who mocked his looks and then fought because his brothers fought. He's been fighting long enough to know it's as much a part of him as the red hair that is a Pied Piper's beacon in Mexico.

Canelo isn't shy or patient about whom he wants to fight and where he thinks he stands among his rivals. He talks about an immediate bout with Floyd Mayweather Jr., although his promoter, Oscar De La Hoya, is reluctant to match him against Erislandy Lara. About Chavez Jr., Canelo is quick to echo criticism that Chavez has heard and begun to counter.

"Yes, I do consider myself better than him," Canelo said. "The people have seen that. The people have told me. I've worked. Thanks to my hard work, I've been able to achieve

FIRST LAS VEGAS FIGHT
Chavez - Feb. 28, 2004
(vs. Oisin Fagan)
Alvarez - May 1, 2010
(vs. Jose Miguel Cotto)

DRAW
Chavez - Dec. 16, 2005
(vs. Carlos Molina)
Alvarez - June 17, 2006
(vs. Jorge Juarez)

FIRST MAJOR MAIN EVENT
Chavez - June 4, 2011
(vs. Sebastian Zbik)
Alvarez - March 5, 2011
(vs. Matthew Hatton)

WON MAJOR TITLE
Chavez - June 4, 2011
(MD 12 Sebastian Zbik)
Alvarez - March 5, 2011
(UD 12 Matthew Hatton)

Saul Alvarez won his WBC title by outpointing **Matthew Hatton** in March of last year. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

what I've achieved. And him? Just because of his father's name."

The rivalry has shown some other signs of momentum that will one day push to an opening bell. In November, Chavez tweeted a photo of him mocking Canelo for a reported assault of flyweight Archie Solis in a dispute over a girlfriend. Chavez wears a red wig while throwing a punch at somebody much smaller.

For now, however, the question about who is better, Canelo or Chavez Jr., is merely an argument. Like Mexico's presidential election in July 1, it's politics. Put them on a ballot instead of in the ring, and who would win?

Longtime Mexican boxing journalist and historian Hesiquio Balderas, of Oaxaca, says he believes Canelo would win the popularity contest.

"In my humble opinion, it is a close call," Balderas says. "I would have to say that even when Julio is fighting better opposition and improving as a fighter, perhaps Canelo is more popular and would get the vote. It all depends on who you ask on the street. I've been asked hundreds of times about who would win a fight between Julio and Saul.

"After I give my opinion, most of the people that asked — and I mean 70 percent of them — would say that Alvarez wins. I have to be honest with you, most of those people do not know much about boxing."

But popularity is a fickle beast. If Chavez Jr. overcomes Martinez, a former soccer player from Argentina, and proves to be a worthy successor to his father's seat at the top of Mexico's pyramid of legends, could he supplant Canelo mania? According to Notifight.com, television ratings in Mexico have been as high as 60 million viewers for his bouts. According to Nielsen, Chavez has averaged more than 1.6 million viewers for his four fights on HBO – Sebastian Zbik, Peter Manfredo, Marco Antonio Rubio and Lee.

Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. won his WBC belt by outpointing **Sebastian Zbik** three months after Alvarez. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

"In Mexico, people are starting to believe in Julio Jr.," says Balderas, who first saw Canelo when he was a grade-school kid running around his mom's store in Guadalajara. "The fight against Martinez is a must for Mexico. The general public is demanding the fight and he has finally agreed to meet Sergio. Argentina and Mexico have a long sports rivalry, especially in soccer, which is the premier sport in both countries. So there is a special element to the fight, even more special for the pride of the fans. Mexicans don´t want to lose to Argentinians and vice-versa."

Unlike many, Balderas says plans for the dueling cards on Sept. 15 might be a good guidepost in what he sees as unstoppable momentum for an eventual Canelo-Chavez fight.

"From my viewpoint, Sept. 15 is a great idea," the Mexican journalist said. "It can measure the popularity of both fighters in the USA. It will be the battle of the ratings. Most importantly, if the Mexicans come out victorious, perhaps they can finally fight each other if Golden Boy and Top Rank are willing to work together."

On the current scale of *ifs*, none is bigger than a Golden Boy-Top Rank alliance. It's right there between world peace and a cure for cancer. Unlike Pacquiao and Mayweather, however, neither Canelo nor Chavez talks about reasons not to fight. It's beginning to sound as if more and more of their fellow Mexicans demand that they do. Perhaps, there's a lesson in that. Perhaps, Canelo and Chavez can make the same demand of Golden Boy and Top Rank. Quit the feud and make the fight, or they'll a find promoter who will. ■

Julio Cesar Chavez Sr. and Jr. are one of the most-formidable father-son duos ever. Image: Chris Farina-Top Rank

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

10 FIGHTERS WHOSE KIDS FOLLOWED THEM INTO THE RING

By Norm Frauenheim

Fathers fight so their sons and daughters don't have to. As common wisdom, that one is as old and reliable as a worn speed bag. For fathers who fought so their kids could become lawyers and such, it makes sense. But there are those who follow dad into a career of fighting fires, or fighting for their country, or fighting for the hell of it. They were born to do it, or at least try it.

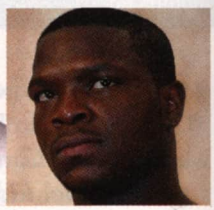
Julio Cesar Chavez, Mexican royalty in a nation that still sees boxing as noble, is the best current example with a 26-year-old son — Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. — whose name and heritage face a defining moment on Sept. 15 against Sergio Martinez.

There's also a younger son, 22-year-old Omar Chavez, a welterweight who has developed a rivalry with another well-known son, Jorge Paez Jr., whose dad, Jorge Paez Sr., was as good a featherweight as he was a clown in the Mexican circus.

Here's a list of 10 fathers with kids who followed them through the ropes, some with success and a few who probably wish they had taken a different path.

JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ AND SONS JULIO JR. AND OMAR

Dad (107-6-2, 86 KOs) fought 115 times. The Hall of Famer won major titles at three weights – junior lightweight, lightweight and junior welterweight. Julio Jr. (46-0-1, 32 KOS) has begun to overcome inexperience, doubts about his commitment and criticism that he's just capitalizing on his daddy's famous name. Omar (28-1-1, 21 KOs) was scheduled for a July 21 rematch in Tijuana with Paez Jr., who beat him by majority decision in December. The family's cumulative record is 181-7-4. The family business is very, very good.

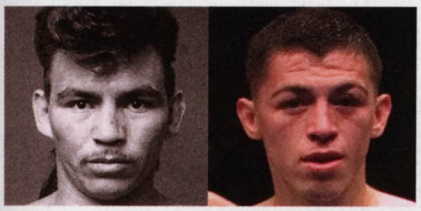


LEON SPINKS AND SON CORY SPINKS

Dad (26-17-3, 14 KOs) was best known in the ring for beating Muhammad Ali and then losing to him in a rematch in 1978. Cory (39-7, 11 KOs) inherited the instincts and none of the goofiness in a career that included a split two fights with Zab Judah and titles at junior middleweight and welterweight. At 34, Cory's career is in the twilight with a loss on June 30 to Cornelius Bundrage. The son made dad look good.

FLOYD PATTERSON AND ADOPTED SON TRACY HARRIS PATTERSON

Dad (55-8-1, 40 KOs), a 1952 Olympic gold medalist at middleweight, was the youngest heavyweight champ ever before Mike Tyson when he stopped Archie Moore as a 21-year-old in 1956. He also was known for winning two of three bouts over Ingemar Johannson and two losses to Sonny Liston. Son Tracy (63-8-2, 43 KOs) won world titles at junior featherweight and junior lightweight. Now 47, he retired in 2001 after a loss to Arturo Gatti. The son gave his shy dad a reason to be proud.



JORGE PAEZ AND SONS JORGE JR. AND AZRIEL

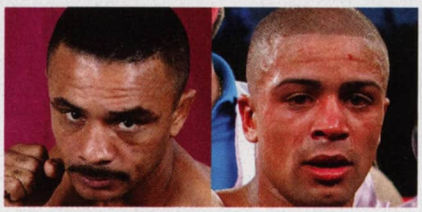
Dad (79-14-5, 51 KOs) was known as much for bizarre costumes as he was for his brawls. He won titles at featherweight and junior lightweight before he became a designated opponent for Pernell Whitaker and Oscar De La Hoya. Jorge Jr. (31-4-1, 19 KOs) is a 24-old welterweight. Younger brother Azriel is just getting started. He's 3-0 as a welterweight. Both have some of dad's boxing skill but none of his showmanship.

FLOYD MAYWEATHER AND SON FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.

Dad (28-6-1, 18 KOs) was a good welterweight but not in the class of Sugar Ray Leonard, who stopped him in 1978. Son Floyd Jr. (43-0, 26 KOs) ranks as probably the best of his own generation and likes to argue that he is at least the equal of Leonard. We'll never know about that Leonard argument. Then again, we might not ever know about the Manny Pacquiao one either. But the son inherited and/or learned what to do and what not to do from dad in a relationship that is the undisputed leader for being dysfunctional.

CARLOS ZARATE AND CARLOS ZARATE JR

Dad (66-4, 63 KOs) had an astonishing knockout ratio best defined by his place in history. He is the only fighter with two streaks of 20 or more successive stoppages. In 1999, the Associated Press voted him and fellow Mexican Ruben Olivares as the best bantamweights of the 20th century. His 24-year-old son, Carlos Jr. (17-0, 12 KOs), is a lightweight prospect. This father-son story is just getting started.

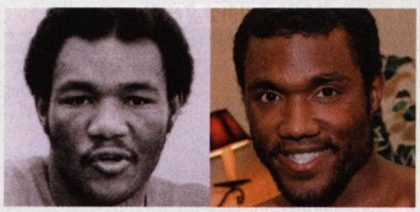


WILFREDO VAZQUEZ AND SON WILFREDO JR.

Dad (56-9-2, 41 KOs) won titles at three weights – bantamweight, junior featherweight and featherweight. He didn't want his son to fight. He wanted him to go to law school at home in Puerto Rico. But Wilfredo Jr., with no amateur experience, decided to make his living in his dad's profession anyway. With dad as his trainer, Wilfredo Jr. (21-2-1, 18 KOs) won the WBO's junior featherweight title but was defeated by Jorge Arce and Nonito Donaire in two of his last three fights. The 28-year-old has a way to go before he equals his father.

THOMAS HEARNS AND SON RONALD HEARNS

Dad (61-5-1, 48 KOs) is one of the legendary names in an era also remembered for Leonard, Roberto Duran and Marvin Hagler. Initially he didn't want his son to fight. He banned Ronald from Detroit's Kronk Gym while he went to school and got a degree in criminal justice from American University, where he played basketball. But the son couldn't resist the game that made dad famous. After Ronald got his degree, he won 10 amateur bouts and then turned pro in 2006. However, Ronald (26-3, 20 KOs), a 33-year-old middleweight, might think about taking the family into a different career after losing to Felix Sturm and Erislandy Lara in his last two bouts.



GEORGE FOREMAN AND SON GEORGE EDWARD FOREMAN III

Dad (76-5, 68 KOs) is best-known for losing to Muhammad Ali in the famous Rumble in the Jungle in 1974 and winning the heavyweight title two decades later as a 45-year-old in a storybook triumph over Michael Moorer. He's also known for a hamburger grill. Son George Edward III (15-0, 14 KOs), better known as Monk, is fighting as a 29-year-old graduate of Rice University in part because younger generations only know his dad for that grill. A restoration of the heavyweight legacy is part of the family business.

GUTY ESPADAS AND SON GUTY ESPADAS JR.

Dad (39-6-5, 28 KOs) held a world flyweight title for a couple of years, 1976 through 1978, and showed great resilience into the mid-1980s as a contender in a division with a short career span. Son Guty Jr. (45-8, 28 KOs), now 37, was a featherweight champion for nearly a year after winning it in 2000 and losing it to Erik Morales in 2001. ■

BY THE SCRIPT

SERGIO MARTINEZ GIVES JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ JR. CREDIT FOR HIS PROGRESS BUT PROMISES A KNOCKOUT

By **Bart Barry**

In November, a half-hour after Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. undid an overmatched Peter Manfredo in a fight to defend the middleweight title taken from Sergio Martinez by the WBC (not Chavez), a small crowd assembled outside the second-floor space where a press conference was scheduled. A few admirers had gathered around the world's recognized middleweight champion who, because of boxing's inverted meritocracy and fickle economics, was in Houston to ask Chavez for a title-unification match.

Martinez entered the media center and stood 20 feet to the right of the dais where Chavez collected congratulations from Manfredo, promoter Bob Arum and others. Martinez did not shout at Chavez or make any scene at all. He stood in a button-down shirt, looking both taller and thinner than he does on fight night, and let his elegant presence alone undermine Chavez's proudest moment as a professional.

"I would knock him out," Martinez said quietly under the din of speakers on stage. "Yes, Chavez is improved, but I would knock him out, don't you think?"

On Sept. 15, the sport of boxing will find out if Martinez is as capable as he believes he is and Chavez is as limited as Martinez believes he is.

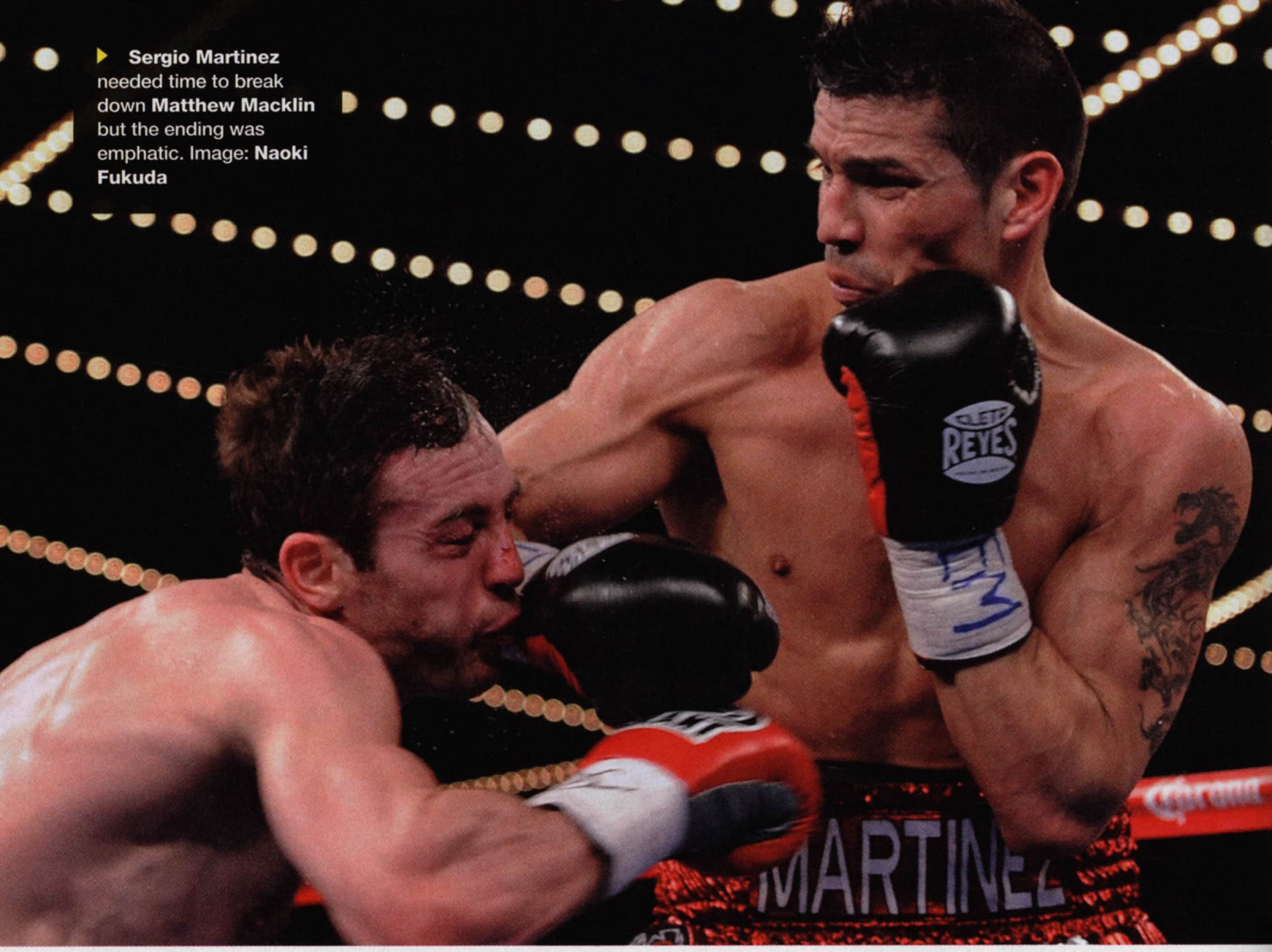
"He's progressed," Martinez said of Chavez's technical knockout of Andy Lee in June, the second title defense Chavez has made since being watched by Martinez in Houston. "It is going to make our fight a better spectacle.

"But, yes, of course I am going to knock out Chavez."

Martinez is nearly unknowable while being entirely accessible. In conversations he is cerebral, respectful, careful and confident. He presents himself to writers as he presents himself to fellow prizefighters — hands lowered and chin out. He avails himself to anyone with a notebook in hand or a request for time. He gives answers that exceed the required sentence or two by a sentence or two, engendering a false intimacy.

Martinez is happy for a challenge but not inviting of one. He enjoys competition — "My life draws its meaning from competition!" he says with a laugh, when told a semi-autobiographical book he is writ-

Sergio Martinez says without hesitation that he will knock out **Julio Cesar Chavez Jr.** on Sept. 15. Image: **Ed Diller**



Sergio Martinez needed time to break down **Matthew Macklin** but the ending was emphatic. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

ing will be published in the same month, October, that America's best novels come out — but he does not look for it where it does not belong. He makes himself available for competition, and when it happens, when it breaks out with Martinez in its throes, he overtakes the moment quickly and competes intensely until victory is assured.

"Fifty percent, each one," he says of who controls his pre-fight strategies. "(My trainers and I) study, and then we converse, each bringing his own perspective."

If Martinez has a mental weakness, and he may not, it is that he sometimes forgets opponents have volition of their own. Once he has made a study of a man, Martinez is surprised if that opponent does not follow the stage instructions scripted for him. Martinez claims never to leave a script or improvise haphazardly, though few onlookers might believe a Martinez fight has any set plan at all.

"Ninety-nine percent of what you see in a fight of mine is studied beforehand," he says. "Each thing is planned before. Even the smile I give my rival, and when — that is planned."

As he says this, one imagines him smiling through a phone in Madrid, where he divides his time evenly with Argentina and California, a third of the year in each. Part of what makes the southpaw Martinez unknowable is the set of influences that shape him. He is an Argentine but speaks like a Spaniard. He trains in Oxnard, Calif., recent home to some of boxing's more notorious characters, but fights like none of them — slicker than Fernando Vargas, sharper than Brandon Rios, altogether more refined than Antonio Margarito.

Ah, Margarito, the Mexican, the only man to stop Martinez. Twelve years ago. Might that man from Tijuana present a September blueprint for Julio Cesar Chavez Jr., a fellow Mexican pressure fighter who is larger than his opponents, more physical, better-chinned and similarly lacking a plan B?

"I am not the same person I was 12 years ago," says Martinez. "That man is not my equal today. People who feel that way should bet on Chavez, and lose."

Margarito was Martinez's last uncontroversial loss. There was a farcical draw with Kermit Cintron in 2009, and a likely draw with

Paul Williams 10 months later — called a majority decision for Williams. Good as the first match with Williams was, today it is lost to posterity, mostly for what followed. Martinez decisioned the lineal middleweight champion, Kelly Pavlik, in April 2010, rising from the canvas and slicing the Ohioan with left-cross counters that disarmed Pavlik before they wrecked him. Then, with insiders' attention finally fixed on him, Martinez avenged his loss to Williams with a second-round knockout unforgettable for any who saw it:

The Argentine walking in a rightward circle, setting his feet, lowering his center of gravity, dropping his right shoulder, and from a distance launched a left hand that landed so flush that Williams' consciousness was gone and Martinez's glove was raised before the man's limp body settled on the blue mat.

That is not the fight of which Martinez is proudest, though. He was part of a well-established team that scripted the punch, he still insists, by the time that 2010 rematch happened. Rather, Martinez is proudest of a 2003 decision victory over a different Williams, Englishman Richard "The Secret" Williams, a fight Martinez won by unanimous scores in Manchester.

"I was alone, then," Martinez says. "It was not simply the victory; there were other things in my life at that time that make me proud of that fight."

That was nine years ago. It marked the 30th fight of Martinez's career. Today, he is 37 years old and in training camp for the largest event of his career, a payday that will come to his challenger, Julio Cesar Chavez Jr., "Son of the Legend," before Chavez's 27th birthday.

"Before a fight, in the dressing room, I am not preoccupied," Martinez says. "My mind is occupied, not preoccupied, by thoughts of myself, of my state, that I am feeling good."

Chavez, conversely, is preoccupied in the moments before each fight but has shown marked improvement in every outing since he acquired the services of trainer Freddie Roach in the spring of 2010 and transformed himself from a spoiled brat to a young prince thrashing usurpers. In June, Chavez stomped through well-polished southpaw Lee, drawing roughly three times as many fans to the University of Texas-El Paso's Sun Bowl Stadium as Martinez drew at his last match, a difficult knockout victory over British middleweight Matthew Macklin in March.

After Chavez stopped Lee, he visited ringside media to answer deadline reporters' questions and worked hard to leaven his exuberance with words menacing enough about Martinez and their inevitable clash. Julio Cesar Chavez Sr., ringside for the Spanish-language broadcast of his son's fight, strived for no such subtlety, interrupting

Sergio Martinez seems to have been supremely confident at promotional events leading up to his fight against **Julio Cesar Chavez Jr.** Image: **Chris Farina-Top Rank**

his son's meandering answer to say of Martinez: "He has talked so much s--t! When the fight happens, I hope he doesn't run around the ring like a chicken."

Martinez, a small middleweight and a picture of agility, is unfazed by Chavez Jr.'s considerable size advantage and stalking ways.

"Pavlik and Williams were larger men," Martinez says. "And those were better fights for me. His size is no advantage for him."

And for the Mexican legend's comments, Martinez has a direct rebuttal.

"To Chavez's dad I would say, 'I hope they do not allow me to hit your child too many times.'"

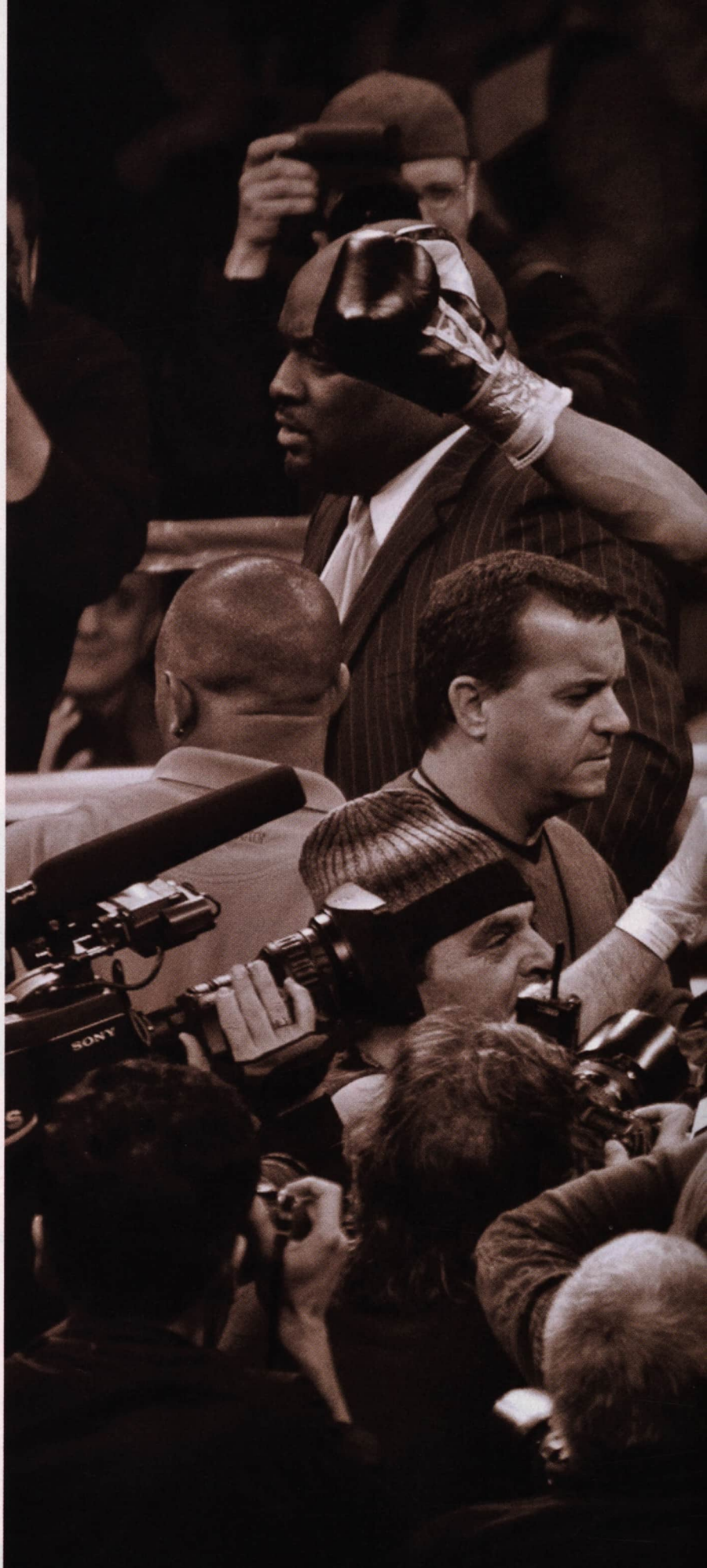
Martinez is less fazed, still, by any advantage Chavez's youth might bring and the obvious concerns aficionados have voiced about the legs of a man nearer his 40th birthday than his 30th.

"The advantage in age is mine," Martinez says. "I feel better, stronger and faster, than I did 10 years ago. It is attributable to my professionalism, my desire to improve myself. The advantage is mine. It's mine."

There is an edge of Latin machismo in Martinez's character, an edge he conceals well. He is, after all, a dancer, a gorgeous performer who entertains with scripted steps at the collective expense of his opponents while being oblivious to them, as if the other men were mannequins Martinez twirls, slides alongside and ultimately brutalizes with his fists.

But Martinez is the very opposite of oblivious, and in his core every bit a man who makes a living hurting other men. He is particularly aware of the man, and pedigree, he will confront on Sept. 15.

"Justice, a victory for me would signify justice," Martinez says. "Because Chavez is a lie." ■



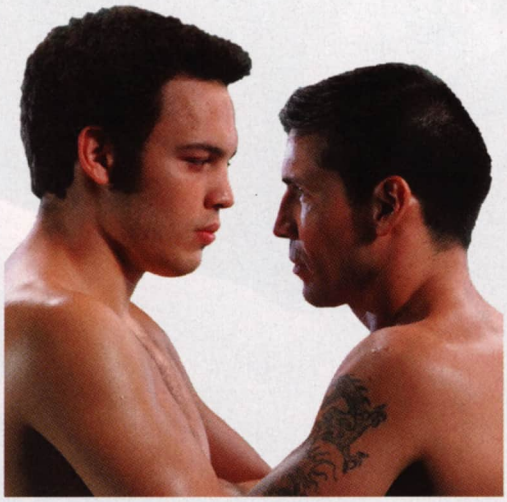
Sergio Martinez's greatest moment was his one-punch, second-round knockout of **Paul Williams** in 2010. Image: **Tri Nguyen**

HEAD TO HEAD

CHAVEZ VS. MARTINEZ

By **Doug Fischer**

Sergio Martinez is universally recognized as the middleweight champ, but the talented Argentine veteran has searched for a big-name opponent since taking THE RING championship from Kelly Pavlik via unanimous decision and defending it with a second-round KO of Paul Williams in 2010. Until recently, Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. had his father's famous name but none of the credibility, despite becoming the first Mexican to win a major middleweight title last June. Chavez was viewed as no match for Martinez, No. 3 in THE RING's pound-for-pound ratings, last year, but "Junior" has evolved into a real contender since winning the WBC belt.



While Martinez (49-2-2, 28 knockout) appeared to struggle in RING title defenses against Darren Barker (KO 11) and Matthew Macklin (TKO 11), Chavez (46-0-1, 32 KOs) looked unstoppable in his seventh-round knockout of Andy Lee in June. The son of the legend looked so formidable that some fans and members of the boxing media now believe his youth, size and pressure-fighting style will be too much for the 37-year-old champ. Chavez will get his opportunity to prove that he's more than a beltholder with a name when he battles Martinez for middleweight supremacy on Sept. 15. Here's how the two match up.

SKILLS: Chavez, a giant pressure fighter, has good inside technique and an effective body attack. Martinez, a dynamic southpaw boxer-puncher, relies more on skill and timing. Chavez relies more on his physicality.

EDGE: Martinez

POWER: Chavez has a higher KO ratio than Martinez but he's been in with weaker fighters and usually wears his opposition down. Martinez has scored one-punch knockouts.

EDGE: Martinez

SPEED AND ATHLETIC ABILITY: Chavez's main physical attribute is being able to boil his huge frame down to 160 pounds. Martinez is gifted with speed, power, coordination and superb timing.

EDGE: Martinez

DEFENSE: Chavez's ability to block punches has improved in recent fights but he still relies too much on his chin. Martinez uses head- and upper-body movement as well as footwork to make opponents miss.

EDGE: Martinez

EXPERIENCE: Chavez, who grew up around boxing and has 48 pro bouts, is as experienced as a 25-year-old boxer can be. However, Martinez has more fights and more rounds (139) against better opposition.

EDGE: Martinez

CHIN: Chavez inherited his father's famous iron chin. He's been hit flush by good punchers and has never been down or seriously hurt. Martinez has reliable whiskers but has technically been dropped three times.

EDGE: Chavez

CONDITIONING: Chavez's conditioning is much better since taking on Freddie Roach as his trainer, but it still pales in comparison to Martinez's year-around commitment to fitness.

EDGE: Martinez

WEAR AND TEAR: Martinez has not only fought more pro rounds than Chavez, he's been in more ring wars, including his 12-round battles with Williams (first fight) and Pavlik and recent tough scrap with Macklin.

EDGE: Chavez

ABILITY TO COPE WITH EXTERNAL PRESSURE: Born with the most famous boxing name in Mexico, Chavez was groomed for the limelight. Martinez is a mature veteran and a consummate professional. He should enter his first major pay-per-view event with poise.

EDGE: Even

CORNER: Martinez's trainer Pablo Sarmiento is one of the best young trainers in boxing, but Chavez is guided by a true legend in recent International Boxing Hall of Fame inductee Freddie Roach.

EDGE: Chavez

OUTCOME: Chavez will seek to cut the ring off and impose his size on Martinez from the onset. The younger man will land punishing body shots whenever he presses the champ to the ropes. However, Martinez will counter Chavez with right hooks when in close and time the crowd favorite with powerful jabs and straight lefts from a distance. Martinez will wear down Chavez with his bombs and wobble the giant late in the fight, but the immense pride of the second-generation warrior will enable him to remain on his feet and make it to the final bell.

PREDICTION: Martinez by close but unanimous decision. ■

Josesito Lopez (left) pulled off a stunning upset against **Victor Ortiz** but faces a bigger challenge in **Saul Alvarez. Image:** Naoki Fukuda

THE SPOILER

JOSESITO LOPEZ PULLED OFF ONE STUNNING UPSET, STOPPING VICTOR ORTIZ. CAN HE DO IT AGAIN?

By **Ryan Songalia**

Josesito Lopez's fate seemed sealed before he arrived at Staples Center in Los Angeles on June 23 to face the heavily-favored former welterweight titleholder Victor Ortiz.

On paper, the fight appeared to be the mismatch most observers dismissed it as. Ortiz was fighting for the first time since a knockout loss to Floyd Mayweather Jr. last year but was considered to be stronger than Lopez, who had fought most of his career at lightweight and junior welterweight. Lopez was also coming off a loss to Jessie Vargas and was a late replacement for Andre Berto, who was unceremoniously removed from a rematch with Ortiz after failing a drug test.

Add it all up, and you had the makings of an early trouncing. In fact, expectations for the bout were such that Ortiz was already scheduled to face WBC junior middleweight titleholder Saul "Canelo" Alvarez on Sept. 15.

Luckily, for Lopez, fights aren't fought on paper.

Ortiz came out aggressively, backing Lopez up with his heavy southpaw crosses and uppercuts. But each time, Lopez came back fiercely, defying the script, stunning Ortiz briefly with his own hard shots in each of the first two rounds.

"I noticed since the very beginning in the exchanges I was landing some shots and I knew they were hurting him," said Lopez, of Riverside, Calif.

Josesito Lopez (left) finally got a break – both in terms of good luck and **Victor Ortiz's** jaw – in a sometimes-frustrating career. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

"Later on, it seemed like he was less eager to want to exchange because I was landing good punches."

By the ninth round, it seemed as if logic was starting to take over and Ortiz began to assert himself. His back to the ropes, Lopez swung with all he had, clipping Ortiz with a left hook. Immediately Ortiz began to retreat, taking a flush right hand as he turned his back to evade more punches.

Moments later, just before the 10th was set to begin, Ortiz informed the referee that he had had enough, ceding the fight in a scene eerily reminiscent of his defeat to Marcos Maidana in 2009. As it turned out, Ortiz had suffered a broken jaw. The sudden conclusion came as a surprise to everyone, especially Lopez.

"As far as the broken jaw, I really didn't even know," said Lopez (30-4, 18 knockouts).

"The people that saw the fight on paper didn't know me as a fighter so I somewhat understood (them doubting me)," continued Lopez. "Ortiz is a big guy, a strong puncher. I'm just a skinny kid in the 140-pound division."

Though relatively unknown going into the fight, Lopez was no charity case.

After a successful run as a cross country and track standout at Ribidoux High School in Riverside, Lopez turned down scholarship opportunities to run in college for the hard road — turning professional as a boxer.

Lopez had a modest amateur background that consisted of around 70 fights, he estimates, with no national tournament experience. Unable to capture the attention of a major promoter or manager, the road to this point was paved in thorns. Lopez won some but lost some as well, beginning in a four-rounder against Rodrigo Lopez in his third fight.

Lopez would suffer three more close decision losses, all either split or

Josesito Lopez basked in the greatest moment of his career. Image: **Jeff Gross-Getty Images**

majority verdicts, on cards organized by the other fighter's promoter. He scored a few upsets along the way, including a knockout of previously unbeaten prospect Mike Dallas Jr. and a decision victory over Venezuelan Olympian Patrick Lopez.

"It's tough, not only losing but losing close fights to hometown fighters and what not," said Lopez. "It sucks, it really brings you down and makes you rethink about this career because, in boxing, there's too much focus on that zero, the losses. I feel like I'm still learning a lot every fight, win or lose."

As expected, the victory has opened up other big fight opportunities for Lopez. And once again, the deck is stacked against him.

With Paul Williams (motorcycle injury), James Kirkland (injury) and Ortiz (broken jaw) out of the Canelo sweepstakes, and Alvarez's promoter, Golden Boy Promotions, not keen on matching him with the high-risk, low-reward Cuban Erislandy Lara, Lopez is getting the call to fight in the main event at the MGM Grand.

To call the fight a physical mismatch is to put it lightly; Lopez had been fighting between 135-140 before stepping up to welterweight to face Ortiz and weighed only 144 pounds for that bout. Now he steps up to 154 pounds to face the 22-year-old Alvarez, whom Golden Boy is pinning many of their hopes on to become a major pay-per-view star in the same vein as Oscar De La Hoya.

"I wouldn't even say I'm a full welterweight yet," admitted Lopez, who works as a personal trainer outside of the ring. "As long as we're strong we'll give anybody a fight. I definitely see myself in the welterweight division in the near future. I'm a Mexican Paul Williams, I'll fight anybody from 140 to 154 or 160.

"If everything goes well against Canelo, I might just move up to 160 and challenge Chavez Jr.," Lopez said in jest.

Lopez is a realist and knows that he's being brought in to face Canelo because of his perceived vulnerability, just as he was against Ortiz. The feeling of facing long odds is nothing new to Lopez, and neither is overcoming them.

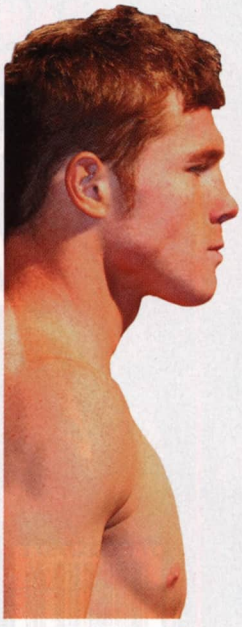
"I really try not to think about (being brought in to lose), and it looks like it might be the case. I'm here to give them hell and to pull off that upset," Lopez said. "If that's their plan, which it seems to be, I'm here to ruin it." ■

HEAD TO HEAD

ALVAREZ VS. LOPEZ

By **Doug Fischer**

Rugged junior welterweight Josesito Lopez shocked the boxing world when he broke Victor Ortiz's jaw en route to stopping the former 147-pound titleholder after the ninth round of Lopez's first major welterweight bout in June. Can he do it again against an even bigger foe?



Fans of the sport's latest "Rocky" story will find out when Lopez challenges Saul "Canelo" Alvarez for the unbeaten Mexican star's WBC 154-pound title on Sept. 15 in Las Vegas. As he was going into the Ortiz fight, Lopez is a huge underdog against Alvarez, but he brings certain attributes and intangibles that should make for an entertaining fight. Here's how they matchup:

SKILLS: Both Alvarez and Lopez are aggressive boxers with big hearts and underrated versatility. Alvarez, who has a good jab, solid footwork and tighter technique than Lopez, is more willing to box when necessary.

EDGE: Alvarez

POWER: Alvarez is the naturally bigger fighter and he has a much higher knockout percentage than Lopez (70.7 to 51.4).

EDGE: Alvarez

SPEED AND ATHLETIC ABILITY: Alvarez and Lopez have comparable hand and foot speed, reflexes and stamina. Alvarez is better coordinated and more explosive.

EDGE: Alvarez

DEFENSE: Neither fighter is known for his defensive prowess but Alvarez does a better job of keeping his hands up and stepping back or leaning away from punches.

EDGE: Alvarez

EXPERIENCE: Both fighters are experienced young pros who have fought a variety of styles. Alvarez has gone more rounds (260 to 195) and has been in with slightly better competition.

EDGE: Alvarez

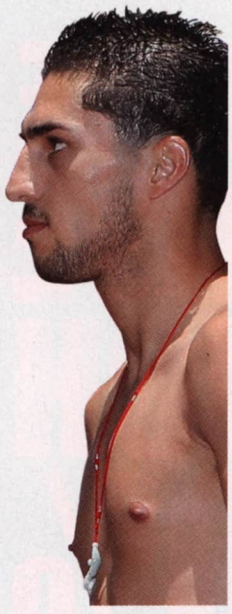
CHIN: Apart from an off-balance knockdown against Wes Ferguson, Lopez has always exhibited an excellent chin, which absorbed the best shots Ortiz could unload. Alvarez has solid whiskers but was badly rocked by Jose Cotto, a natural lightweight.

EDGE: Lopez

CONDITIONING: Lopez hasn't always dedicated himself to the sport. Lack of training led to late-round fades that resulted in close decision losses to Ferguson and Edgar Santana. Alvarez has trained to fight the 12-round distance since he was 17.

EDGE: Alvarez

WEAR AND TEAR: Alvarez has more fights than Lopez (42 to 35) and he's gone more pro rounds, but he hasn't been in many grueling fights. Lopez had tough fights with Jessie Vargas and Ortiz but is still a fresh fighter.



EDGE: Even

ABILITY TO COPE WITH EXTERNAL PRESSURE: Alvarez has been a main event fighter showcased on national TV (in Mexico) since he was a teenager. Lopez, though developed on club shows, proved with the Ortiz fight that he's not one to be intimidated by the big stage.

EDGE: Even

CORNER: Lopez is guided by one of California's better young trainers, Henry Ramirez , who also trains heavyweight contender Chris Arreola. However, Alvarez's father-and-son coach team of Jose and Edison Reynoso have more world-class experience.

EDGE: Alvarez

OUTCOME: Alvarez will start fast and try to test the chin of Lopez, who will pass with flying colors (and fists). After some early fireworks, Alvarez will wisely back off and work his jab while stepping around the ever-advancing Lopez during the middle rounds. Alvarez will attack when he sees openings, and his punches will knock Lopez back on his heels. But the gritty challenger will punch back and land power shots every time the Mexican star tries to close the show. Both fighters will sport facial bruises and lacerations going into the late rounds, which will feature vicious body-head exchanges. However, Alvarez will be the busier fighter and finish stronger.

PREDICTION: Alvarez by competitive unanimous decision. ■

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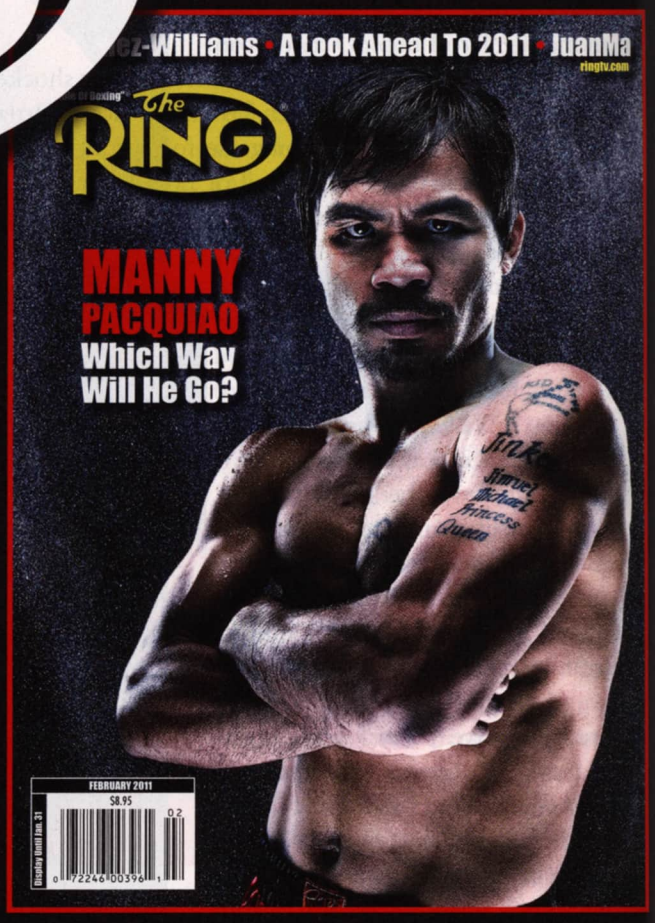

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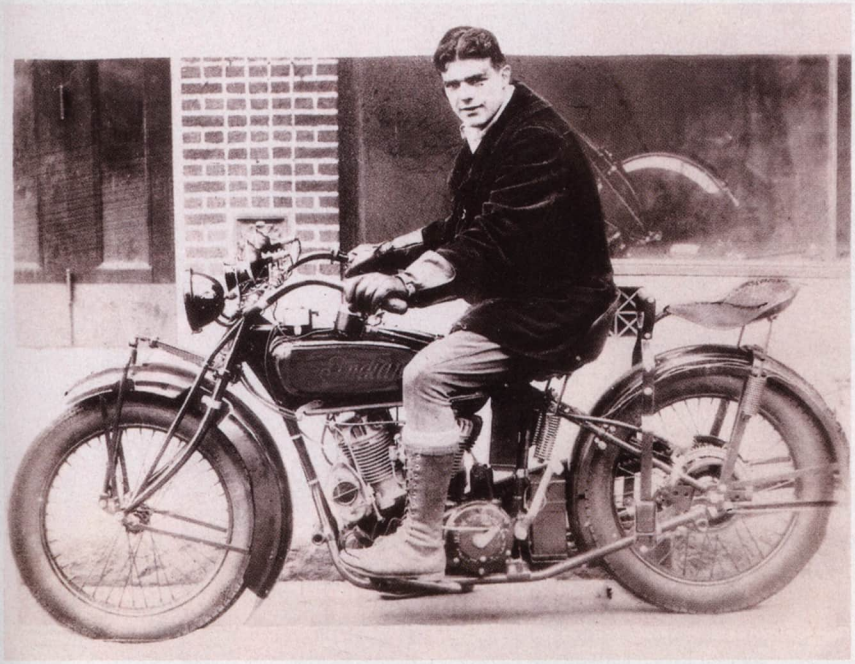


CUT DOWN

FIVE FIGHTERS WHO, LIKE PAUL WILLIAMS, HAD THEIR CAREERS CUT SHORT BY TRAGIC ACCIDENTS

By **Don Stradley**

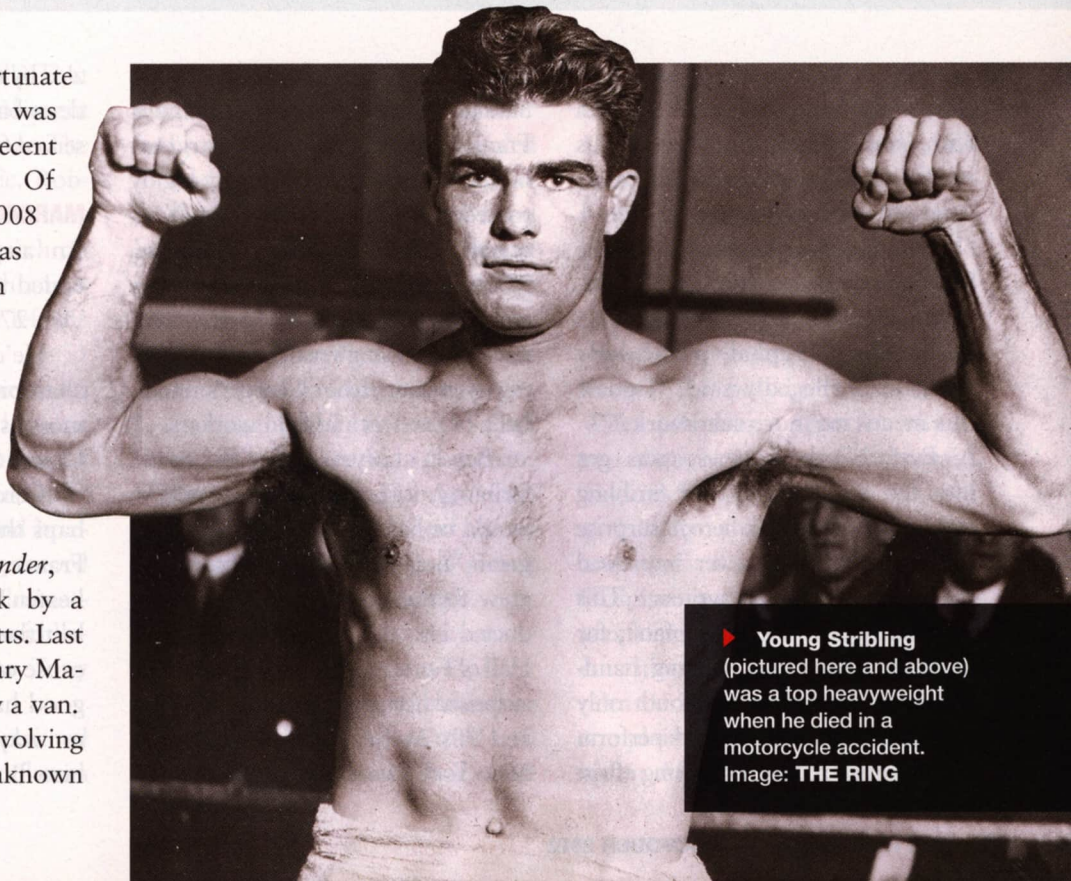
Paul Williams' unfortunate motorcycle accident was just one of many recent mishaps involving fighters. Of course, Diego Corrales' 2008 motorcycle death in Las Vegas made the most headlines in recent years, but there have been many others. Australian women's amateur champion Donna Pepper died on a motorcycle in February 2012, the same month that saw Jeff Fraza, a former star of *The Contender*, killed when he was struck by a moving train in Massachusetts. Last year, retired heavyweight Gary Mason was struck and killed by a van.

Other recent incidents involving fighters include young, unknown pugs driving off of cliffs, to 19-year-old Olympic hopeful Pedro Luis Sosa being critically injured in a car accident on the Cross Bronx Expressway. Then there was the plight of British amateur fighter Dennis Tyson, who suffered a career-ending injury while protecting his family from a wild dog attack in 2009.

This isn't to say that fighters are any more prone to tragic accidents than anyone else, but Williams' situation reminded us of the many catastrophes that have befallen fighters throughout boxing history. Fortunately, although his career is likely over, Williams will still be around. Some of the others were not so lucky.

YOUNG STRIBLING

Stribling was often criticized for being overly cautious in the ring, but outside the ropes he was possessed by recklessness. Cars, airplanes, motorcycles, anything that gave him a chance to travel at daredevil speeds, fulfilled him more than boxing ever did. But one October afternoon



Young Stribling (pictured here and above) was a top heavyweight when he died in a motorcycle accident. Image: **THE RING**

Marcel Cerdan (during his KO victory over **Tony Zale**) was en route to the U.S. for his rematch with **Jake LaMotta** when he was killed in a plane crash. Image: **THE RING**

in 1927 he was involved in a horrible motorcycle crash that left him with fatal internal injuries. He was rushed to a hospital in Macon, Ga., where he died days later.

Newspapers, especially in the South, played up Stribling's deathwatch. Much of the coverage was probably apocryphal, particularly when he'd allegedly said, "I guess this means no more roadwork."

Even Northern newspapers got into the act, helping turn Stribling into a kind of sad folk hero, a surprise since Stribling had never impressed the Northern boxing writers. This was partly Stribling's own fault, for he made a career of beating handpicked opponents in the South only to come to New York and perform like a skittish rookie. His losing effort against Paul Berlenbach at Yankee Stadium was described by columnist Frank Menke as, "the most putrid exhibition ever displayed by any highly touted fighter in modern New York annals." Even Stribling's nickname, "The King of the Canebreaks," was coined by Damon Runyon as a comment on Stribling's penchant for fighting opponents from Georgia's underbelly of farmers and field workers.

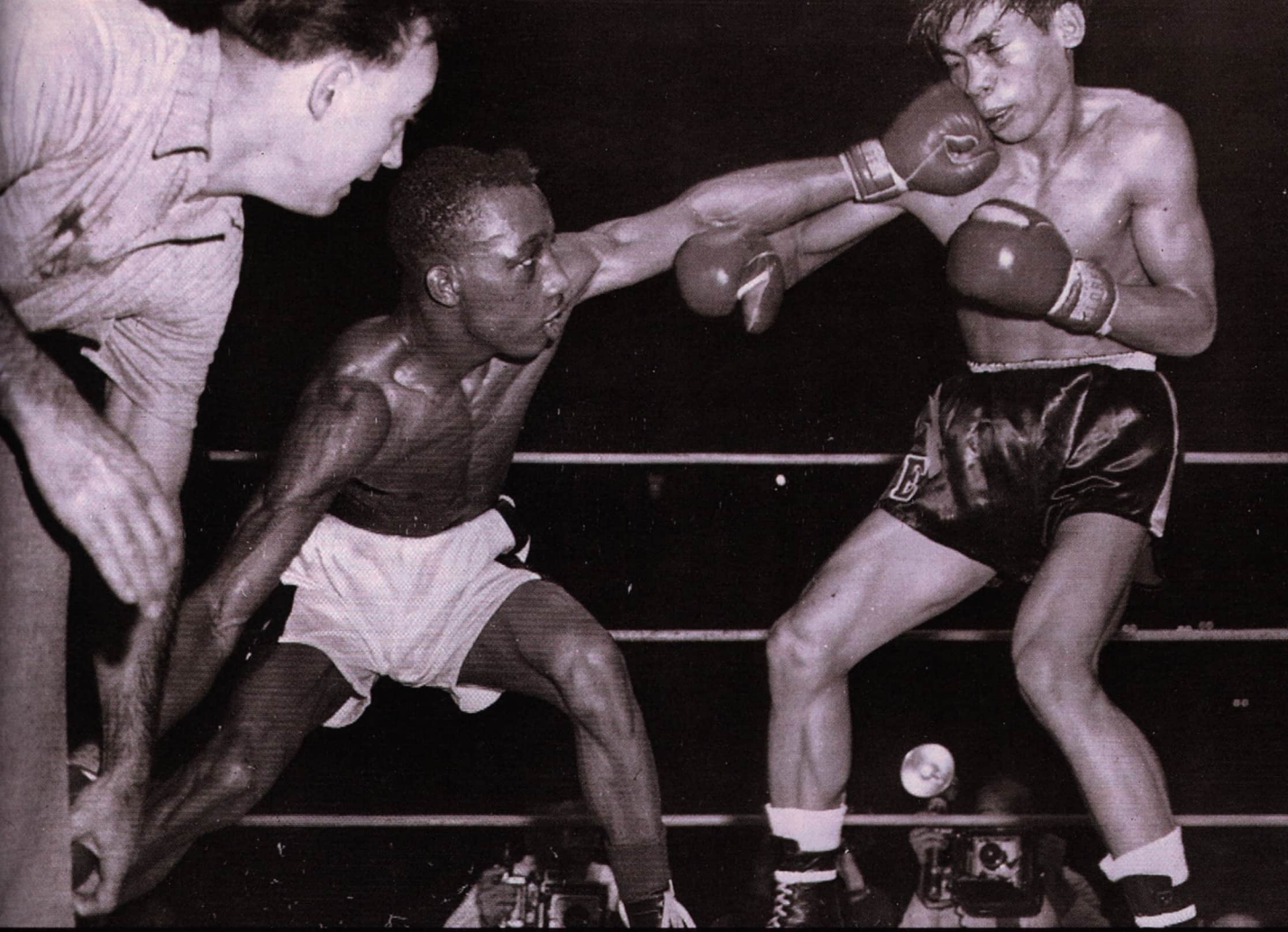
But in the years after his death, Stribling's legacy would grow and he would be heralded as one of boxing's great "non-champions." His legend grew to the point where he was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 1996, which would've surprised his many critics of the 1920s and '30s. At the time of his death, *The New York Times* was genuinely puzzled by the size and tone of his funeral, describing it as something "usually reserved for national tragedies."

MARCEL CERDAN

An airplane crash in the Azores ended Cerdan's life and career on Oct. 27, 1949.

He'd lost the middleweight championship to Jake LaMotta four months earlier and was flying to the United States for a rematch.

Cerdan was a great fighter, perhaps the finest ever to emerge from France, and could very well have beaten LaMotta in the rematch. He'd lost the first bout when he quit because of a shoulder injury. With two good hands, most agreed there was no way LaMotta would've beaten him. But imagine if he had regained



The career of **Sandy Saddler** (fighting **Flash Elorde**) ended when he was 30 years old because of injuries he suffered in a car accident. Image: **THE RING**

the title from the Raging Bull? That might've led to a sensational event in Cerdan vs. Ray Robinson. The bout would've been a classic. Robinson was flashy, but Cerdan may have been flashier, with a watch on each wrist, gold-capped teeth and a tabloid-worthy love life that left the American press blushing.

But if Cerdan was at home in jewelry stores and nightclubs, it was in a boxing ring where his genius bloomed. A ferocious body puncher and good all-around boxer, he posted an astonishing record of 111-4 (65 knockouts), culminating with his winning of the middleweight championship from Tony Zale in September 1948.

Portuguese sheepherders claimed to have seen Cerdan's plane in flames as it fell from the sky. It crashed 90 miles north of the Santa Maria air base, where it had been scheduled to land for refueling. Air France officials couldn't explain why they had lost contact with the plane. Charred bodies and fragments of remains were found over a 500-yard radius. There were no survivors. The 47 victims included Cerdan, his manager, Jo Longman, and his trainer, Paul Genser. When asked for a comment, French boxing icon Georges Carpentier said, "France has lost one of its greatest champions. It is a true period of national mourning."

SANDY SADDLER

Saddler's career came to an end in July 1956 when a New York cab he was in collided with a car. At the time, Saddler was a 30-year-old featherweight champion with 103 knockouts to his credit. His career highlights included his four-bout series with Willie Pep and his epic battles with Flash Elorde. Described by A.J. Liebling as "being built like a bundle of loosely joined fishing poles," Saddler was known for his dour disposition. When asked by a reporter why he was always so serious, Saddler said, "I guess I'm just evil."

Saddler survived the accident and was taken to Knickerbocker Hospital in New York, where he was diagnosed as being in "fair" condition. He was scheduled to be released in a few days but began to complain of headaches and double vision. After a series of surgeries and

Dominican star **Carlos Cruz** (unloading on **Mando Ramos**) was flying to Puerto Rico for a fight when the plane crashed in the ocean, killing him and his family. Image: **THE RING**

experimental treatments, Saddler began to go blind in his right eye.

By January 1957, the National Boxing Association, forerunner of today's WBA, was hassling Saddler about defending his title. As Saddler's vision faltered, and doctor's warned him to never fight again, the alphabet group stripped him of his championship. Saddler hoped to file a lawsuit against the taxi company, but then it was alleged that his eyes had been troubling him even before the accident. Saddler couldn't win; even though his bank account was dwindling, he agreed to an early retirement.

"I cried like a baby," Saddler told The United Press. "Fighting is all I've known since I was 17 years old. The whole bottom of my world fell out."

In retirement, Saddler began training and managing fighters. Through some stroke of luck, his eyesight improved. By the time he was 32, his vision was nearly perfect. He was back in the boxing gym, teaching his protégés some of the tricks he once used. He told the press, "I lost my career, but I got my sight back, and that's all that matters."

CARLOS CRUZ

In February 1970, a Dominican Airlines DC-9 crashed into the waters of the Caribbean, killing 32-year-old Cruz, his wife and two children, and the rest of the passengers, including members of Puerto Rico's national volleyball team. The pilot had radioed five minutes after take-off that he was losing power in one engine and was turning back; that was the last message heard from the plane before it went into the sea. In all, 102 people were killed. A recovery crew searched the crash area five miles south of Santo Domingo and discovered 20 bodies. According to a Navy spokesman, all 20 had been badly mutilated by sharks.

Cruz, the Dominican Republic's first boxing champion, began his career in 1959. Although he got off to a rough start — he lost seven of his first 14 bouts — he battled his way around the world, literally, with stops in America, Australia, England, Jamaica and Japan until he earned a shot at venerated lightweight champion Carlos Ortiz of Puerto Rico in 1968. Dropping Ortiz in the first round, the scrappy Cruz managed to win a split decision in what was regarded as one of the biggest upsets of the year. He made a successful title defense against Mando Ramos in September 1968, but lost the title to Ramos via 11th-round TKO in February '69. Cruz had won four bouts in a row and seemed ready for another title challenge at the time of the crash. His final bout, just weeks before the tragedy, was a 10-round points win over Benito Juarez. The win brought his record to 42-13-2 (14 KOs). A dozen years later, Cruz's younger brother Leo would have a brief run as WBC junior featherweight titlist.

The son of a Dominican military officer, Carlos Cruz didn't start boxing until he was 20. By 1963, he had attracted the attention of New York matchmakers, who brought him stateside for several bouts at Sunnyside Gardens and Madison Square Garden. He rarely fought in America after that, but at the time of the fatal flight in 1970, he was reportedly scheduled for a bout in Los Angeles.

Ironically, the fighter Cruz defeated for the lightweight title, Ortiz, was listed among the passengers but was said to have missed the flight.

SALVADOR SANCHEZ

Sanchez, "The Little Giant," was a 23-year-old featherweight titleholder in his absolute prime when he was involved in a three-vehicle collision in August 1982. He didn't survive, but he left behind a legacy that still impresses three decades

Mexican **Salvador Sanchez** (landing a punch against **Danny Lopez**) was only 23 and in his prime when he was killed in a three-vehicle collision. Image: **THE RING**

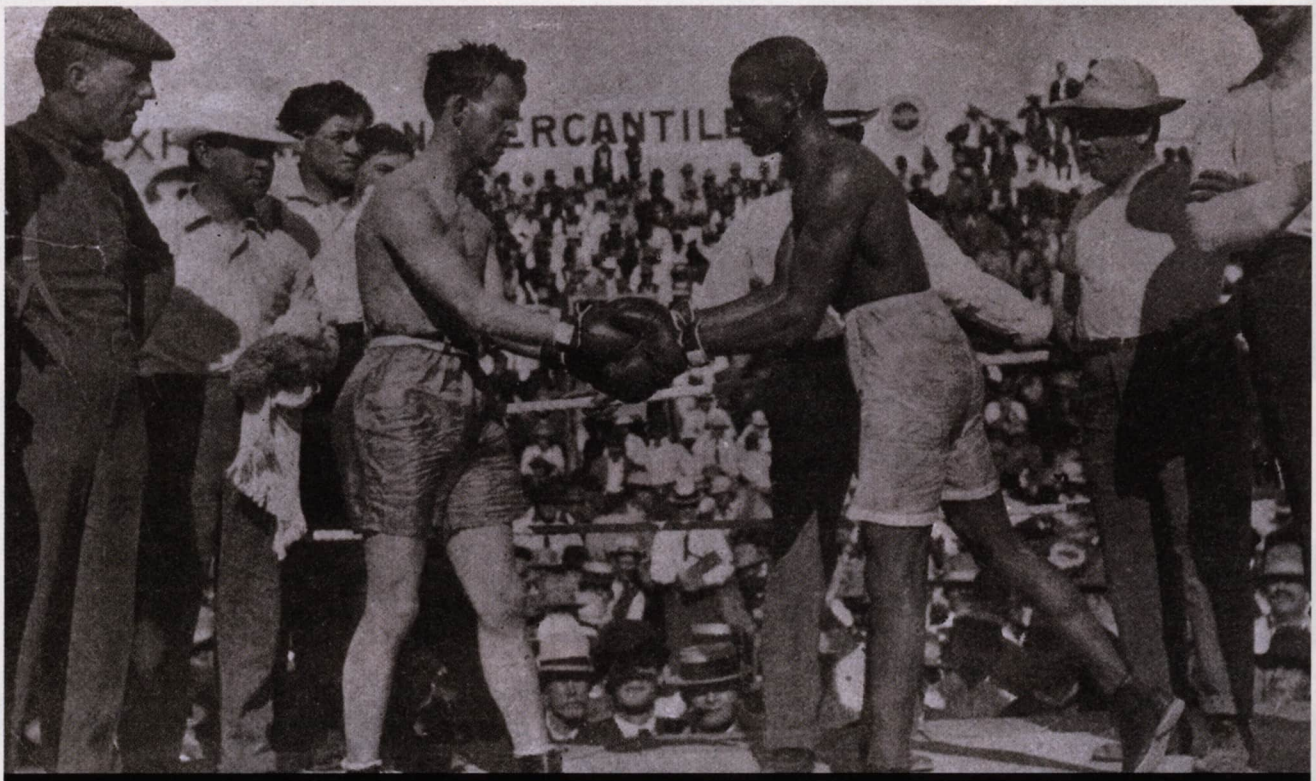
later. Sanchez's record, 44-1-1 (32 KOs), was built over a short amount of time. He had two knockout wins over Danny Lopez, plus wins over Juan LaPorte, Wilfredo Gomez and Azumah Nelson. At the time of his death, Sanchez was considered the best featherweight in the world, as well as one of the top Mexican fighters of all time.

The crash that killed Sanchez occurred about eight miles north of Queretero, a city 139 miles north of the Mexican capital. Sanchez, an auto buff who owned nine cars, was driving his white 1981 Porsche at an excessive speed when he crashed into the back of a truck loaded with two farm tractors. Another truck piled in seconds later. Sanchez suffered multiple injuries and died immediately. News reports at the time said Sanchez was traveling to his training camp in Guanajuato when the accident occurred, but in 2011 a former sparring partner, Jose Cabrera, told *The San Antonio Express* that Sanchez was on his way to see his mistress.

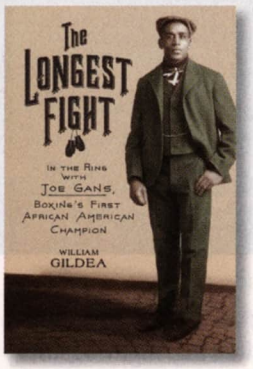
Dozens of fans crowded around the Queretero morgue when news of Sanchez's death broke. Later, a helicopter carried Sanchez' body to his hometown of Santiago Tianquistenco, where his funeral was held the next day.

According to Sanchez's family, he was considering fighting only once or twice more before retiring. One of those bouts was said to involve his coming up in weight to challenge Alexis Arguello.

Nowadays, a nephew of Sanchez carries on the Sanchez boxing tradition. It can't be easy, though. It is difficult enough to fight in the shadow of a great Mexican fighter, but it must be doubly difficult for Salvador Sanchez II to fight in the shadow of a legend tragically cut down in his prime. ■



The Longest Fight provides a detailed — and fascinating — look at the epic brawl between **Joe Gans** (right) and **Battling Nelson** in 1906. Image: **THE RING**



AN UNLIKELY SUPERSTAR

THE LONGEST FIGHT DESCRIBES HOW JOE GANS, THE FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHAMPION, THRIVED DURING INTOLERANT TIMES

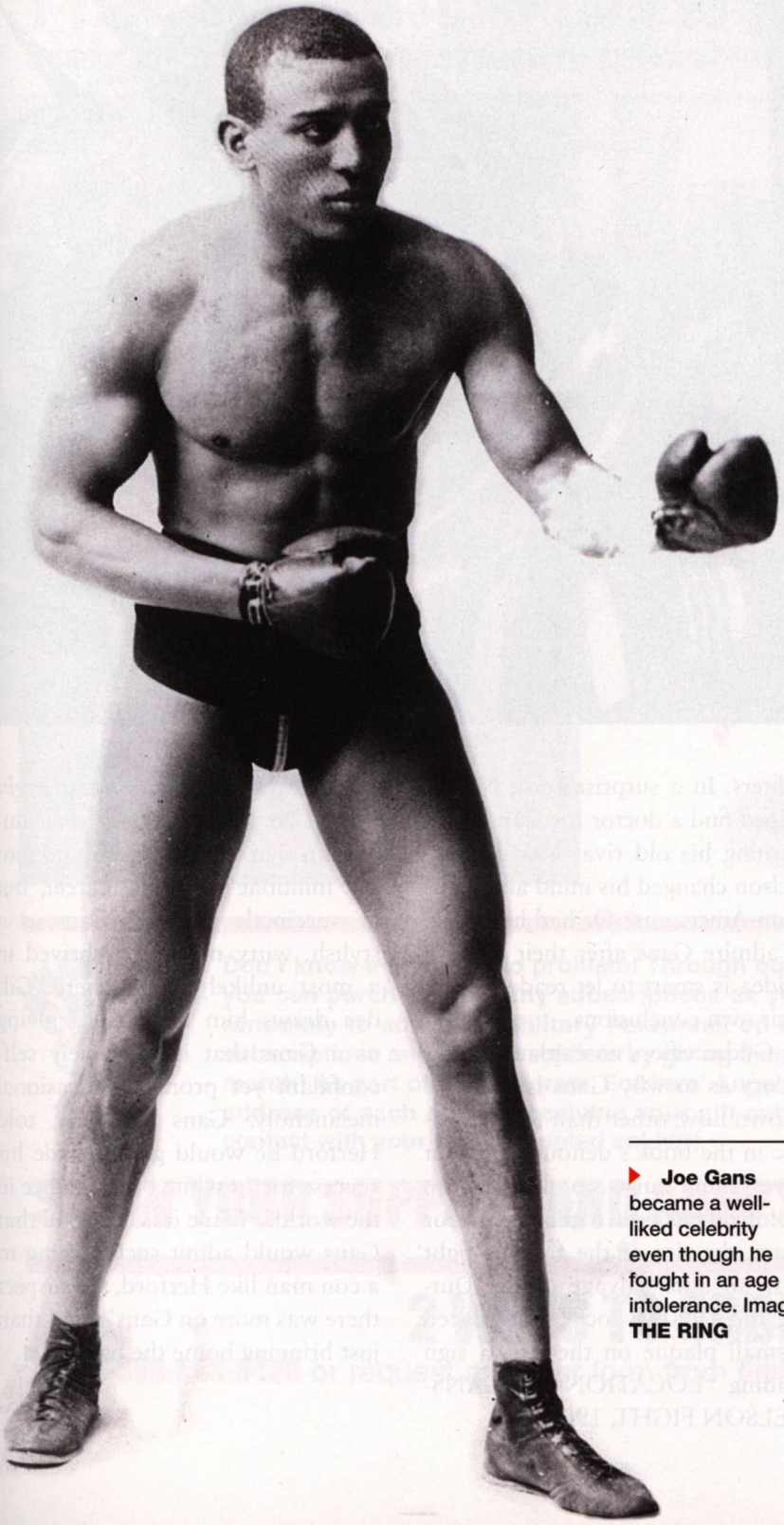
By **Don Stradley**

Joe Gans was so popular during his heyday that even one of his weddings made headlines, knocking other events from the New York society pages. In fact, Gans was so well-liked that he was responsible for making the phrase "Bringing home the bacon" part of the American lexicon. This sort of acceptance was astounding for a black boxer in the 1900s, but it shows that Gans' great skill and gentlemanly deportment earned the admiration of whites and blacks alike. Writing about Gans in 1961, THE RING's Ted Carroll described him as having "a mystic immunity to the prejudices of his period." This isn't to say Gans was spared the indignities and slurs endured by other African-Americans, but as described in William Gildea's graceful new book, *The Longest Fight* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux), Gans' life was certainly an anomaly in an era of discrimination and lynching.

The countrywide embrace of Gans stemmed mostly from his talent as a fighter, for even the most bigoted of whites could appreciate a brilliant blocker of punches who could take a man out with one shot. That he never gloated was part of it, too. Writer Rex Beach, while covering a Gans bout for *Everybody's Magazine* in 1906, took note of Gans' facial expression and wondered if, "this was work for which he had no fondness." Gans had perhaps originated the blasé appearance that Joe Louis would incorporate years

later. Indeed, some early reports on Louis referred to him as "another Gans." Significantly, Gans was the only fighter ever honored with a statue at Madison Square Garden. Now it stands in the MSG Hall of Fame, but in the old days it stood in the Garden lobby, where fighters would often touch it for luck, hoping a bit of "The Old Master" might rub off.

But despite Gans' popularity, he is not well known today. He was the first African-American boxing champion, winning the lightweight title years before Jack Johnson won the heavyweight crown. Yet, Johnson bestrides the era, while Gans is just a vaguely recognized name. Of course, Johnson's fiery life and outlaw status practically guaranteed that he would be remembered. Interest in Johnson picked up during the civil rights era, when his life was made into a Broadway play and then a movie. A story about the genteel Gans wouldn't have translated well during the turbulent 1960s. Still, Gans was a genius in his own right and deserves to be remembered. He was, after all, America's first black superstar.

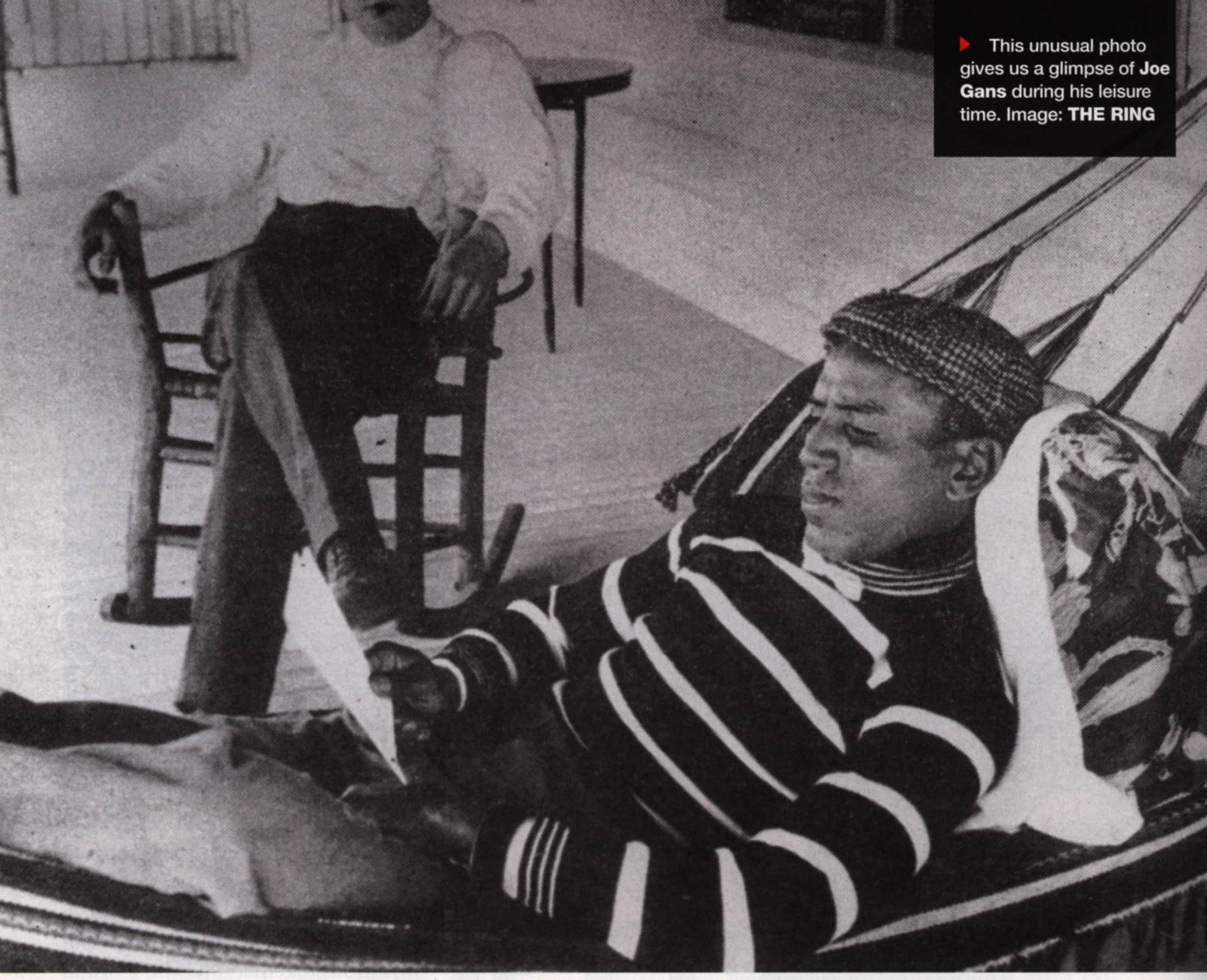


Joe Gans became a well-liked celebrity even though he fought in an age of intolerance. Image: **THE RING**

The main focus of Gildea's book is Gans' epic 1906 bout with Battling Nelson in Goldfield, Nev. The fight, a 42-round replication of Hell on Earth, was the biggest boxing event of the time and established Gans as the premiere ringman of his era. Gildea, a *Washington Post* writer for 40 years, weaves the saga of the Goldfield bout into the general story of Gans' life, peppering the tale with stories of black life in the 1900s. Well researched and beautifully realized, *The Longest Fight* provides brief but interesting glimpses of Tex Rickard, the resourceful hustler who put the bout together; Nelson, a brutal bigot with an almost supernatural ability to take punishment; Al Herford, Gans' shady white manager who occasionally persuaded Gans to not do his best; and Goldfield itself, a rough mining town lousy with gunmen and low-life.

The Gans described by Gildea is a somewhat mysterious figure, a lurker in the background, someone who didn't make waves, but quietly absorbed the happenings around him. Gans was no angel — he had a serious gambling habit, and confessed to taking part in more than one fixed fight. But not even his confession that he took a dive against Terry McGovern affected his reputation unduly. Gans was like Teflon.

By the end of *The Longest Fight*, when Gans finally succumbs to tu-



This unusual photo gives us a glimpse of **Joe Gans** during his leisure time. Image: **THE RING**

berculosis at age 35 and is carried across the country by train to die in his beloved Baltimore, it's as if the violence and criminality of the boxing world, and America itself, wore him out. In his final days he weighed 84 pounds and couldn't speak. According to some accounts his funeral procession included over 100 horse-drawn carriages, and the service was attended by as many as 7,000 people.

Gans' three-bout series with Nelson is painful to read about, especially when it becomes obvious that Gans was already suffering from the consumption that would kill him. To Gildea's credit, he doesn't paint Nelson as an outright villain despite Nelson's joy in beating up black fighters. In a surprise turn, Nelson helped find a doctor for Gans upon learning his old rival was ill. Had Nelson changed his mind about African-Americans? Or had he grown to admire Gans after their trilogy? Gildea is smart to let readers draw their own conclusions.

Gildea offers no explanation or theory as to why Gans isn't better known now, other than to wax poetic in the book's denouement that "everything turns to dust." Even Goldfield has been a ghost town for years, the site of the famous fight now an auto salvage dump. During the 1990s a local man placed a small plaque on the site, a sign reading "LOCATION OF GANS-NELSON FIGHT, 1906."

A copy of *The Longest Fight* should be placed next to that aluminum sign. Gildea doesn't go into the minutiae of Gans' career, but he succinctly portrays Gans as a stylish, witty man who thrived in a most unlikely atmosphere. Gildea draws him beautifully, giving us a Gans that is supremely self-confidant yet prone to occasional melancholy. Gans allegedly told Herford he would gladly trade his success for "a white boy's chance in the world." While it is doubtful that Gans would admit such a thing to a con man like Herford, we suspect there was more on Gans' mind than just bringing home the bacon. ■

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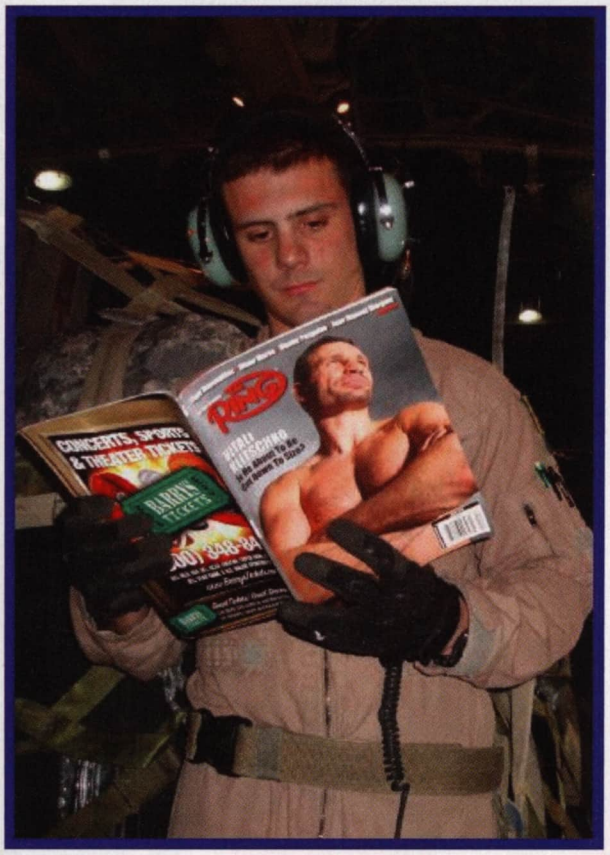

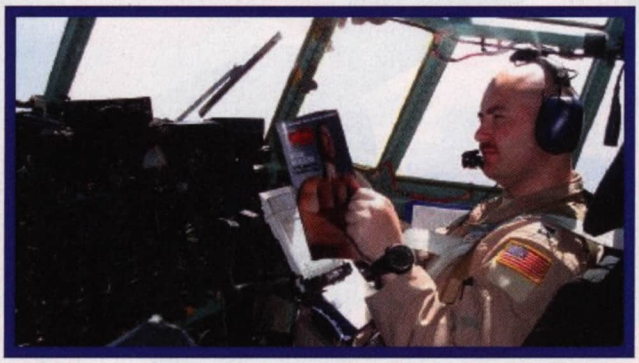

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Carl Froch has earned respect in both Great Britain and abroad. Image: **Scott Heavey-Getty Images**

> "After the Bute win, I think people started thinking, **'Gosh, look at all the guys he's fought; he's a real warrior.'**"
>
> **–Carl Froch**

CARL FROCH GETS HIS DUE ... FINALLY

THE UNDERAPPRECIATED SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT SEALED THE DEAL WITH HIS KO OF LUCIAN BUTE

By **Gavin Evans**

Carl Froch's day-to-day trips around his neighborhood in Nottingham, England — to pick up his 2-year-old son, Rocco, from the nursery or to check up on one of the properties in his portfolio — can take a bit longer than before. There are autographs to be signed and pictures to be posed for.

His celebrity status is not yet at the level of David Haye or even Amir Khan — although his achievements in the ring far outstrip those two — but he's gaining ground quickly. His Twitter following is approaching the 100,000 mark, his face can frequently be seen on Sky and the BBC, and the requests for public appearances keep rolling in.

Froch puts it down to three factors: his decision to sign with Eddie Hearn of Matchroom, the move that followed to Sky and, more immediately, the emphatic manner in which he defeated previously unbeaten Lucien Bute. Froch, such an underdog in that fight that Showtime turned him down as a suitable opponent, overwhelmed the IBF titleholder, stopping him in five one-sided rounds.

Suddenly everyone took notice.

"I've had eight fights in a row at the top level, with the best super middleweights in the world, starting with Jean Pascal in December 1988," he told THE RING from his Nottingham home. "But after the Bute win, I think people started thinking, 'Gosh, look at all the guys he's fought; he's a real warrior.'"

Another way of looking at it is that it's remarkable how little publicity he garnered until then, given all he had going for him: his 3½-year ride among boxing's elite, his thrilling fighting style, his willingness to take on the best, his confident and sometimes abrasive style outside the ring. One might add to this list the eye-candy delight of his girlfriend, model Rachel Cordingley.

Most particularly, it is hard to think of any other champion in British boxing history who has endured an unbroken series of fights quite as demanding as Froch has — Pascal, Jermain Taylor, Andre Dirrell, Mikkel Kessler, Arthur Abraham, Glen Johnson, Andre Ward and Bute. Froch was the underdog in five of those fights and was a strong favorite in none of them yet went 6-2. This certainly won him kudos among the pundits and the die-hard fight fans, but it barely registered with the wider British sporting public.

One reason might be that Froch, unlike Haye, has been reluctant to take the publicity game to its extremes. With the twinkle of pound signs in his eyes, Haye tosses around outlandish insults

Image: Scott Heavey-Getty Images

THE GAUNTLET

Carl Froch has faced eight arguably elite opponents in succession, a remarkable run that has established him as a true star. He was 6-2 in those fights, losing only to Mikkel Kessler and Andre Ward. Here are those opponents and how he fared.

LUCIAN BUTE (May 26, 2012) – Froch's spectacular fifth-round KO caused a sensation on both sides of the Atlantic.

ANDRE WARD (Dec. 17, 2011)– No one is in the same class as the gifted American, who won a unanimous decision.

GLEN JOHNSON (June 4, 2011) – Froch had to settle for a majority decision but was in complete control.

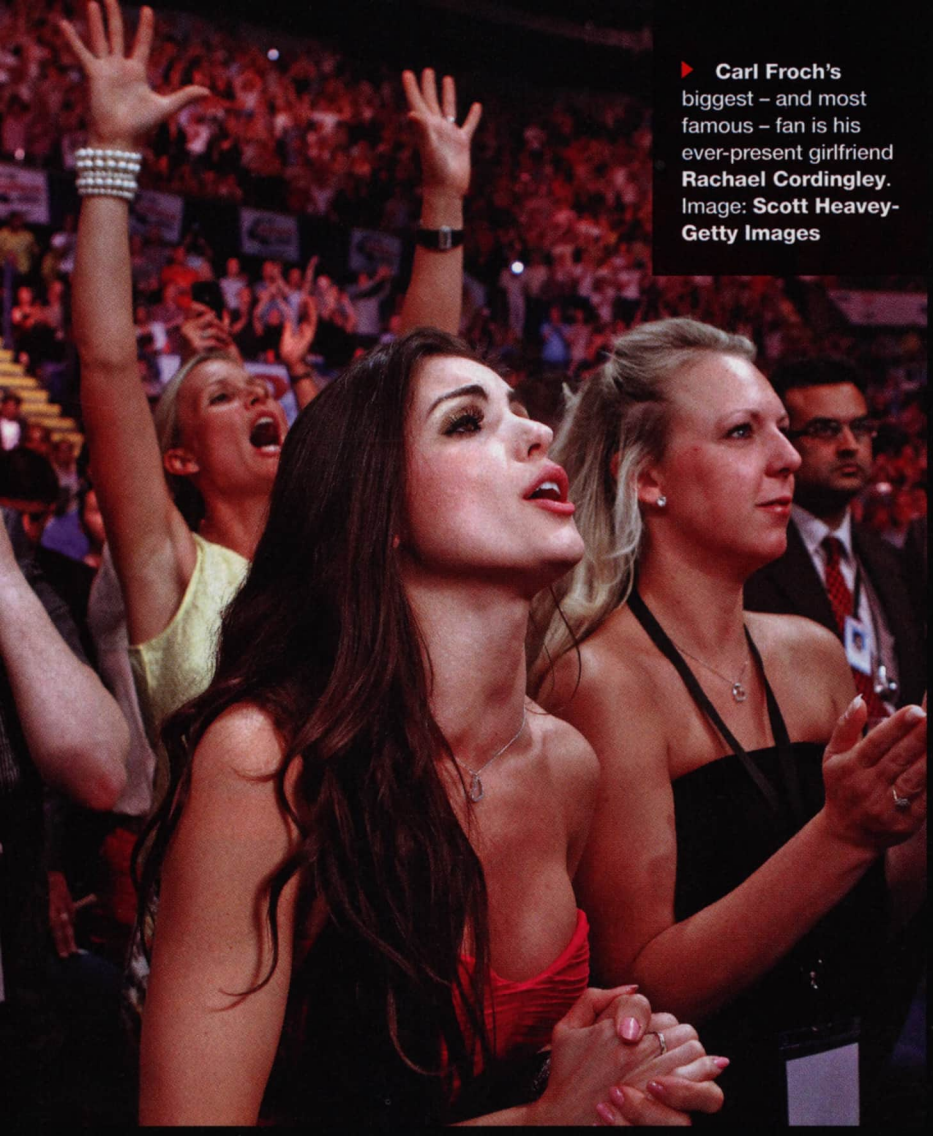
ARTHUR ABRAHAM (Nov. 27, 2010) – Froch came within one round on one card of pitching a shutout.

MIKKEL KESSLER (April 24, 2010) – Kessler won a unanious decision in Denmark but not everyone was convinced.

ANDRE DIRRELL (Oct. 17, 2009) – Froch pulled out a split-decisiony victory in his native Nottingham.

JERMAIN TAYLOR (April 25, 2009) – A brutal final-round knockout gave Froch a victory in a fight he was losing.

JEAN PASCAL (Dec. 6, 2008) – A convincing unanimous decision kicked off a remarkable string of important fights.



Carl Froch's biggest – and most famous – fan is his ever-present girlfriend **Rachael Cordingley.** Image: **Scott Heavey-Getty Images**

to his opponents — from severed heads to body odor — and speaks in graphically exaggerated terms about what he will do to them, going as far as predicting the Audley Harrison fight would be "as one-sided as a gang rape."

Froch has no truck with any of this and is adamant he won't go out of his way to hype up a fight for pay-per-view hits. Only against Dirrell — an opponent who riled him — did he resort to threats about inflicting pain. His more usual style is the "good luck" and handshake that followed the weigh-in at the Kessler fight.

But the main reason for his underexposure relates to his bad luck with television. Froch turned professional in March 2002, sailing in Harrison's post-Olympic wake. The BBC signed Froch and Haye as part of the package, exposing them to a large terrestrial audience. But then, as Froch puts it, "Audley stuffed up by fighting nobodies and boring everyone to death, so the BBC pulled out."

Froch's then-promoter, Mick Hennessy, concluded a deal with ITV (the biggest of Britain's three commercial terrestrial broadcasters), "but as soon as I won the WBC title against Pascal the economy went bust and ITV pulled out of boxing."

Hennessy had no relationship with Sky, which meant that the satellite and cable broadcaster made the odd decision to say no to Froch, preferring lesser talents. The result was that Froch's next 2½ years — covering his dramatic last-minute knockout over Taylor, his thriller against Kessler and his drubbing of Abraham — he was relegated to the small potatoes broadcaster, PrimeTime. This meant that for anyone not a devoted boxing fan, Froch had fallen off the radar.

When his contract with Hennessy expired, Froch cut his losses, and after scouting around, signed with Matchroom, under the direction of Hearn, who secured him that elusive deal with Sky.

"My relationship with Eddie has been second to none, and a lot of the exposure I'm having now has been down to his efforts," he says. "Since then, I've been getting more media exposure, including television shows outside of boxing. It's been brilliant."

When THE RING profiled Froch early in 2010, he talked of retirement around 2013. But now, with the "career prolonging" program Hearn has set out, it looks likely to be a longer ride — one aimed at building on his burgeoning celebrity status, both at home and abroad, and building his bank balance.

On signing for Bute, Froch agreed to a return bout in Montreal, and the Canada-based Romanian seems inclined to hold him to it.

"Understandably, he wants an interim fight first," Froch said. "He needs that to rebuild his confidence, and we are happy to oblige, so it looks like we'll both fight on the same bill on Nov. 3, and I'll be fighting at home, against a Top-10 opponent, and then we'll fight the return in Montreal in March or April."

The problem with the return is that the first fight was so brutally one-sided that it would be hard to imagine the result going any other way, but then you only have to think of, say, Patterson-Johansson or Louis-Schmeling to realize that an emphatic upset victory does not guarantee the same outcome in the rematch.

Carl Froch (right) simply overwhelmed then-unbeaten **Lucian Bute** to remove any doubt as to his ability. Image: **Andrew Yates-AFP-Getty Images**

"I gave him such a comprehensive beating, and I think I will walk through him again, as long as I'm in the same shape as last time," Froch said. "And that's not necessarily a bad thing in terms of the box office, because it is that kind of sport. We're gladiators and people like to see emphatic knockouts. But in Canada, his fans will be looking for him to get revenge, so the fight will sell very well there."

After that, he hopes to fight a return with Kessler, who beat him on a disputed decision in April 2010. Froch, who still believes he deserved the nod, says that his balance in Denmark was affected by a burst eardrum sustained in sparring and that his preparations were interrupted by arriving too late in Copenhagen because of air-travel restrictions caused by a volcanic eruption in Iceland. He thirsts for revenge over a man he respects and likes.

However, Kessler's purse demands, and the extent of public interest, mean that the fight will probably have to be held in an open-air arena in the summer of 2013.

"This is a fight everyone wants to see because the last one was so good and because the public know that Kessler comes to fight," Froch said. "He's a warrior like me, so it will be huge — in a football stadium. The Nottingham Arena [capacity 10,000] wouldn't be big enough."

The other fight potentially on Froch's longer-term radar is a return with Andre Ward, who outpointed him last December. On the positive side, Froch ran Ward closer than any of the American's other opponents — two of the judges had him losing by only two points – but the Englishman feels he let himself lose that night.

"I'd been training in Manhattan for four weeks for the Glen Johnson fight and then I had to go back there for another three weeks for Ward and it felt like *Groundhog Day*," he said. "I'd had enough. I felt deflated, lacking in motivation. All I wanted was to go home for Christmas to be with Rachel and Rocco, so I switched off.

"I went in there thinking I could just knock him out and neglected my boxing and instead was swinging away. I'm not taking anything away from Ward. He's very good at

Lucian Bute became helpless prey by the end of his fight against **Carl Froch**. Image: **Scott Heavey-Getty Images**

what he does — a technical boxer and a bit of a spoiler — and he beat me fair and square, no question. But I was guilty of not turning up mentally and therefore not coming with my A-game."

Froch says he'd jump at the chance for a return but it can only happen after the Kessler fight.

"He's fighting Chad Dawson next and my next three fights are set out, so it's not part of the plans, but I'd love to fight him, especially if it's here in Nottingham, even though it's not a fight everyone wants to see. We're in the entertainment business and, unfortunately, Ward is seen as too much of a spoiler.

"But if I was in the same shape as for the Bute fight, I would beat Andre Ward, no problem. If I catch him with some of the punches like I landed on Bute, it will be game over. With a performance like that, I'd beat anybody in the world."

After the Ward fight some pundits speculated that Froch was in decline, and that too many hard fights, one after another, had taken their toll. But the Bute victory — his most impressive in 31 fights — has changed minds. His defense and timing seemed sharper than ever, and he appeared to be hitting harder after having gone five fights without a knockout.

He has certainly taken plenty of hard whacks over the last few years, but he insists that there is no serious danger and that brain damage "comes mainly from people who dehydrate themselves too much, so that when they are in the ring they have no fluid around the brain, and they get a brain bleed."

Froch, who looked in mint shape when interviewed by THE RING six weeks after the Bute fight, says he walks around at less than 180 pounds, so there is no problem making the 168-pound limit.

But right now he is a champion at rest. He's talking of finally getting married to Rachel and in the meantime there are properties that need attention, diapers that need changing and, increasingly, celebrity appearances to fill in the gaps.

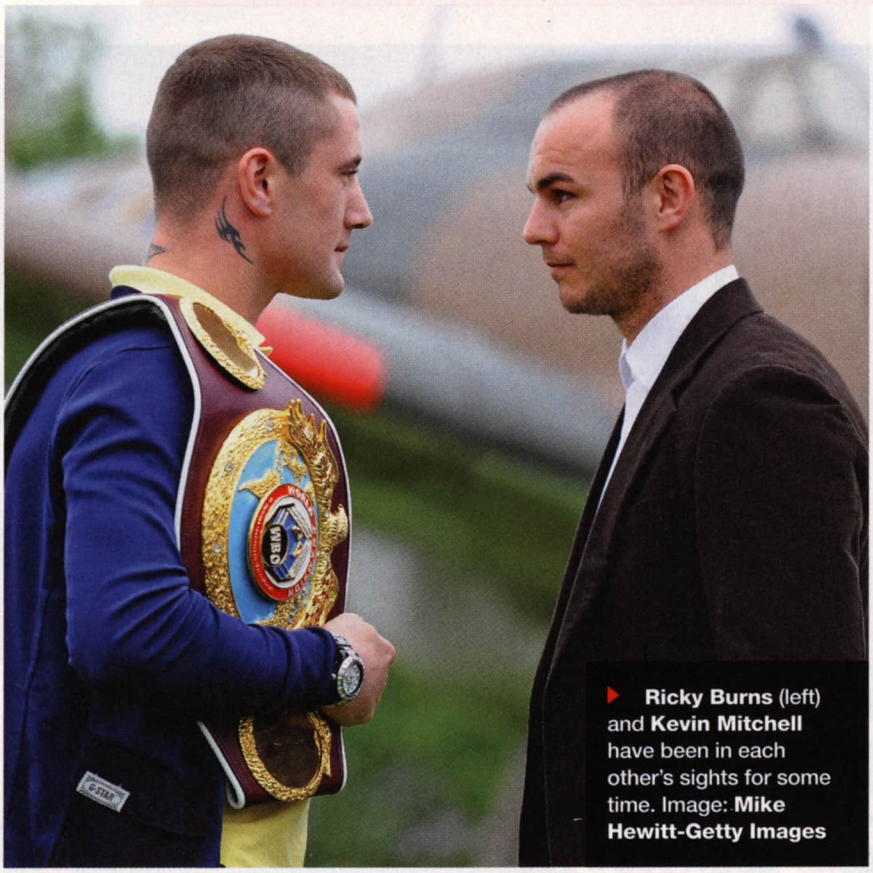
It's been a long time coming, but he feels he has finally arrived as far as his public is concerned.

"Beating Bute brought it all together," he said with a distinct air of satisfaction. "That was the victory that sealed it. It's different now." ■

A NATURAL MATCHUP

THE UK'S TOP LIGHTWEIGHTS — BURNS AND MITCHELL — WILL FINALLY MEET

By **Tom Gray**



Ricky Burns (left) and **Kevin Mitchell** have been in each other's sights for some time. Image: **Mike Hewitt-Getty Images**

"This is one of the best fights in world boxing, let alone Britain."

OK, OK, that was Frank Warren bellowing at a London press conference in an attempt to sell one of his fights. But the UK's most-famous boxing promoter may actually have cause for that predictable rhetoric in this instance.

Ricky Burns will make the second defense of his WBO lightweight title against Kevin Mitchell on Sept. 22 at the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre in Glasgow, an all-British showdown that already has captured the public's imagination.

The long-awaited clash has been in the pipeline since 2008.

"It was scheduled when Mitchell was British champion," said Burns, who is Scottish. "He pulled out because he was struggling to make (junior lightweight), but now we're the top two lightweights in Britain and it's game on."

This is an intriguing match-up on paper: two finely tuned lightweights in the prime of their careers with a combined record of 67-3. Burns, a sharp technician who hits hard enough to keep you honest, and Mitchell, the puncher with underrated boxing ability.

The styles should gel very nicely.

We also have a Scottish world champion against an English challenger, an age-old rivalry that is likely to turn an 8,000-seat arena into a seething cauldron come fight night.

"Neither Kevin nor myself look at the fight that way," Burns said before touching on the nationalistic theme. "On Twitter there have been words exchanged between fans, and it can get heated, but for the most part it's light hearted."

"You will always get one or two people who take things too far."

Very far indeed, it would appear. Scores of keyboard warriors have begun taunting Mitchell with threats of violence, telling him "what to expect" when he arrives on Scottish soil. Such behavior is ridiculous but, if unofficial combat does occur, then one doubts that a Glasgow jail cell will be a good place to convalesce.

The genuine fan affection that Burns and Mitchell enjoy has crystallized under vastly different circumstances. Mitchell (33-1, 24 knockouts) has put a turbulent lifestyle and a stunning loss to Michael Katsidis behind him to emerge as a world title challenger. Burns (34-2, 9 KOs) has established his championship credentials against the odds by defeating both Katsidis and the fearsome Puerto Rican puncher Roman Martinez.

Fans adore the underdog and both of these guys are easy to root for.

"To be the best you have to fight the best," Burns said. "In THE RING lightweight ratings, Antonio DeMarco and Miguel Vasquez are ranked just above me, but I'm confident these fights can definitely happen in the future."

"THE RING title is vacant because Juan Manuel Marquez moved up, and I plan to keep on winning so I can be in line to fight for it."

Burns, now a two-weight world titleholder, promises to wear the stars and stripes should he fulfil that ambition, but Kevin Mitchell will be looking to spoil those sartorial plans come Sept. 22. ■

HAYE-CHISORA

FALLOUT FROM A RAINY NIGHT IN EAST LONDON

By **Gareth A Davies**

LONDON – The fallout from the summer's David Haye-Dereck Chisora heavyweight "rebel" grudge fight, emanating from a brawl in Munich in the early hours of Sunday, Feb. 19, was plentiful. The politics surrounding the event are set to rumble on for some time.

First, the fight.

For all the criticism and moralizing over the split with the British Boxing Board of Control, the contest, and the comportment of the two men after the fight, went a long way in redeeming reputations — both inside and outside the ring.

Haye's weapon of choice, the left hook, unhinged Chisora's equilibrium twice, forcing the stoppage in Round 5. It gave him bragging rights over Vitali Klitschko, who defeated Chisora on points.

Chisora was gracious afterward. Both men and their teams embraced the sanctity of the contest as sport. And the wreckage of Haye's Hamburg nightmare against Wladimir Klitschko was repaired. Haye-Vitali Klitschko has moved to a "waiting-to-happen" event. Will they, won't they?

If they never fight, a debate will rage ad infinitum. I've maintained for some time that Haye's best opportunity of defeating a Klitschko was to face Vitali. Styles and age give Haye the better percentages than against the defense-minded, jab-oriented Wladimir.

What was seen as "anarchy in the UK," with the British Boxing Board usurped by the Luxembourg Boxing Federation due to Chisora having had his license "withdrawn," has become a pitched battle.

Frank Warren, Chisora's manager, has vowed to maintain his campaign against individuals at the British Boxing Board of Control, not the Board itself.

Warren's claim, as a licensed member of the BBBC, is that it is run "like a private members club." "There is not the quality there to regulate British boxing. I take particular issue with the chairman [Charles Giles] and two of the stewards," he told me in the aftermath of Haye-Chisora.

Warren continued his beef with the Board by writing an open letter in The Sun newspaper on July 16, appealing to Lord Coe — Olympic gold medalist, a former Boxing Board steward and the man who chaired the London Organizing Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games — to step in and head the organization.

"As far as Dereck Chisora goes, it was like being on the set of Mississippi Burning, with the Board. He was fined by the WBC to the tune of $100,000. Why should the Boxing Board fine him as well? If they weren't going to ban him, when was he going to be able to fight again?"

One could see by the expression on **Dereck Chisora's** face that **David Haye** just scrambled his brain. Chisora wouldn't remain on his feet for long. Image: **Leon Neal-AFP-Getty Images**

DEL BOY
D.HAYE

David Haye didn't even bother to admire his handiwork on a dramatic night in East London. Image: **Scott Heavey-Getty Images**

"I am not against the BBBC. I am against those who run it like a private members club. There are no elections, the license holders don't have a say in it, and that can't be right," Warren said.

Haye must first await the outcome of Syrian Manuel Charr (21-0, 11 knockouts) facing 40-year-old Klitschko (44-2, 40 KOs) on Sept. 8 in Moscow.

* * *

As a footnote, the event drew estimated pay-per-view figures around the 300,000 mark for fight channel BoxNation. The projected business plan for BoxNation, launched as a stand-alone monthly subscription channel in September 2011, was that it would have 100,000 subscribers by the end of 2012.

* * *

BURNS: UNDERRATED, IMPROVED

The meeting of two-weight world titleholder Ricky Burns (34-2, 9 KOs) and Kevin Mitchell (33-1, 24 KOs) for the WBO lightweight crown on Sept. 22 in Glasgow, Scotland, has much in it to look forward to, with Michael Katsidis as a mutual opponent. Mitchell was flattened by Katsidis in adverse circumstances, having needed eye treatment that he failed to tell his management team about; Burns dealt with Katsidis' slugging by outboxing him.

Burns has to be the most-underrated world titleholder in Britain and the most improved fighter.

"Tickets have sold well for the Burns-Mitchell contest, which many people are excited about. It's a big fight, and it will be a good fight. The styles match really well," Warren, who promotes both men, told me.

"Burns is a good fighter. He beat Roman Martinez in a fight no one expected him to win. He came off the floor in the first round. He didn't just outbox him, he stood toe-to-toe and broke the other fella's heart."

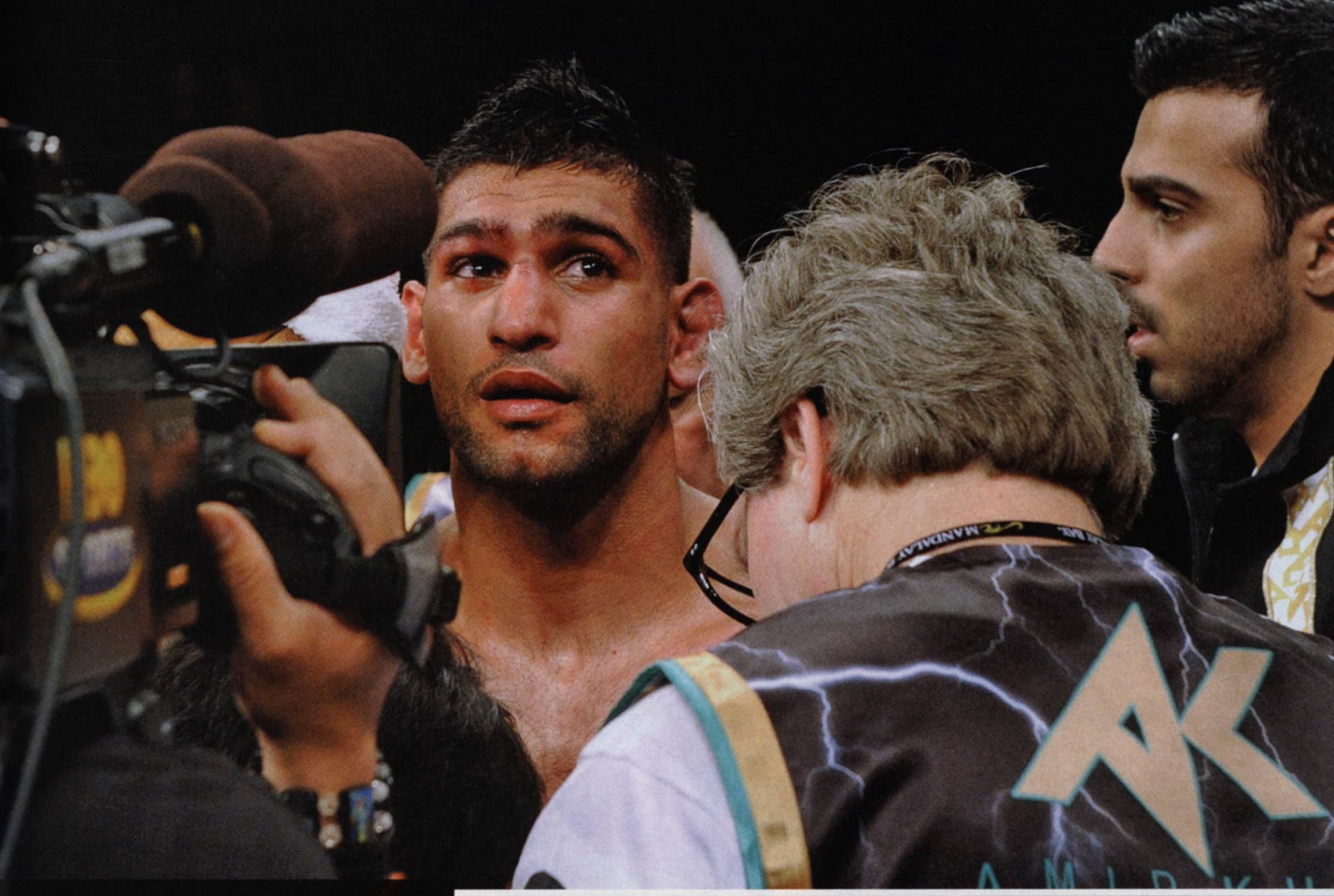
AMIR KHAN: SHADES OF NASEEM HAMED?

Keeping with the Warren theme this month, he promoted Amir Khan, just as he did Naseem Hamed. Warren vowed after Khan left him that he would never work with families again, only boxers themselves.

"I've said it from day one — they will ruin that kid. It is the same as Riath and his brothers with Naseem Hamed," said the British promoter. "His defense is woeful."

There was reflection from Khan on his future with trainer Freddie Roach after the loss to Garcia. Warren's view?

"He's always going to be second fiddle to Manny Pacquiao. Simple reason — dollars. Manny Pacquiao



Is **Amir Khan**, a knockout victim of **Danny Garcia**, following in the path of countryman **Naseem Hamed**? Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

earns 10 to 15 million per fight, Amir Khan doesn't. That means the trainer's percentage is going to be more for Pacquiao. That's the position."

CLEVERLY BACK IN OCTOBER?

Elsewhere, Nathan Cleverly, the WBO light-heavyweight champion, could be back in action in the first week of October.

Warren says Cleverly, the WBO 175-pound champion, will definitely be in action "in a big fight" in early October. Warren has been working behind the scenes to get Bernard Hopkins to the UK. "He's wary of me, for some reason," Warren said. They are also looking at Beibut Shumenov. Whatever way it goes, Cleverly needs a greater challenge than the workout he got against Tommy Karpency in Cardiff, Wales.

Nathan Cleverly could be back in the ring the first week of October. Image: **Julian Finney-Getty Images**

THE GLUE THAT BINDS BRITISH BOXING

There isn't much Dean Powell hasn't done or seen in and around British boxing for the last quarter of a century — matchmaker, cornerman, trainer, confidant.

Powell, 46, has been the glue binding so many fight nights and undercards in the UK since the late '80s.

He's seen triumph and tragedy and treated them all with his calm, collected mind. He deals with all matters with a simple grace, with

Dean Powell (right, with **Ricky Burns**) has been a cornerstone of British boxing the past quarter century. Image: **Scott Heavey-Getty Images**

his lilting Midlands accent. He's forever flicking open his cell phone. Powell became Warren's main matchmaker — following in the footsteps of the deeply knowledgeable Ernie Fossey, who passed away aged 73 in 2003 — but had periods with Frank Maloney, Terry Lawless, Micky Duff and Mike Barrett.

Dean moved to London from Dudley in the late '80s, taking up residence in the Thomas A Beckett, one of the most famous gyms in the country.

"I've had the great fortune to have worked in two of the most famous gyms in British boxing – the Thomas A Beckett and The Royal Oak in Canning Town." Both, sadly, are gone now. "Every day on the way into London, I drive over the North Circular Road and see The Royal Oak and of course, it's closed. It does make me very sad."

When he arrived at the Thomas A Beckett, it was replete with significant fighters: Duke McKenzie, Gary Stretch, Lloyd Honeyghan, Errol Christie, Chris Eubank.

The Royal Oak saw a new breed coming through: Mark Tibbs, Jason Rowlands, Derek Angle, while Mark Kaylor was coming toward the tail end of his career.

"They were great days. I've learnt from Jimmy Tibbs, Dennie Mancini, Terry Lawless. Those three really helped me. I worked for Frank Maloney and obviously since working with Frank Warren for the last 10 years, my career route is the equivalent of an Oxford University education — but in boxing."

There have been saddening times, too. He recalls "sitting in the hospital with Michael Watson," who suffered horrific brain injuries in his second fight against Chris Eubank in 1991. And there is a tear in his eye as he recalls the death of Bradley Stone in 1994: "I was very young at the time, and both events had a big effect on me."

Ernie Fossey was greatly respected as one of the most knowledgeable people in boxing and was a hard act to follow. Powell is now drawing comparisons with the former Islington coalman and the great cornerman Mancini. Speaks volumes. ■

Gareth A Davies is Boxing Correspondent for *The Telegraph*, London.

GOING IT ALONE

SADAM ALI AND HIS FATHER, DAVID, HAVE TAKEN THE UNUSUAL STEP OF STARTING THEIR OWN PROMOTIONAL COMPANY TO BUILD ALI'S CAREER

By **Tim Smith**

Sadam Ali believes he can build a name for himself without the benefit of a big-time promoter. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

Paulie Malignaggi kept imploring Sadam Ali to unleash the right to the body of Franklin Gonzalez.

"Sadam, come on! One time to the body and it's over," Malignaggi shouted from his ringside seat.

Ali did not comply. Instead, he kept slugging Gonzalez everywhere except the body, carrying the 36-year-old Dominican journeyman for nearly all of the scheduled eight rounds before stopping him on a technical knockout at 2:22 of the final frame — as if he wanted to give the fans more for their money.

It was clear that Ali was boxing like a promoter. And for good reason: Ali and his father, David, were the promoters of the card at the Brooklyn Aviator Sports Complex.

It is not uncommon for active boxers to start their own promotion company. Oscar De La Hoya, Floyd Mayweather Jr., Manny Pacquiao, Shane Mosley, Miguel Cotto, and Roy Jones Jr. are just a few who have done just that with varying degrees of success.

However, it is rare for a prospect to start his own promotion company in order to build himself into a marketable commodity in the sport.

"It's something I would strongly discourage," said Richard Schaefer, CEO of Golden Boy Promotions, De La Hoya's promotion company. "It does take deep pockets. Young fighters need to fight frequently and they need a lot of exposure to different styles. There's a time for everything. For a well-established fighter, it's a little easier, but not much."

The list of young prospects who struck out on their own promotional trail and succeeded is very short. Mike Tyson, Riddick Bowe and Tommy Morrison did it, but they were heavyweights and Bowe had a silver medal from the 1988 Olympics. Jones did it, but he had the backing of HBO Sports. Sugar Ray Leonard did it. He also had an Olympic gold medal and was a ready-made star coming out of the 1976 Games thanks to his charisma and the TV exposure on that international stage.

"Generally it's not a great track record among fighters who promote themselves," said Lou DiBella of DiBella Entertainment, a New York based promoter. "If you're promoting on a regular basis, there are a lot of costs involved. It's his prerogative and it's not illegal. Good luck to him."

Ali, 23, was a member of the 2008 U.S. Olympic boxing team, but he didn't win a medal. Most of his 14 professional bouts (14-0, 9 knockouts) have been in the New York and New Jersey area and were on the cards of other promoters who were hoping to sign him to a long-term contract.

Kathy Duva, President of Main Events Promotions based in Totowa, N.J., was one of those promoters who gave Ali slots on cards with the goal that he would join her company. Duva even put Ali on the undercard of the Vitali Klitschko-Tomasz Adamek heavyweight title fight in Poland last year. Ali still didn't sign with Main Events. So Duva cut ties.

"We could no longer justify taking away opportunities on our shows from the other people that we have under contract," Duva said. "I don't know if he's going to go from where he is now to where he wants to go without signing with a promoter. There's an awful lot of risk involved. I wish him well."

Ali and Main Events seemed like a good fit because Main Events has a television deal with NBC Sports Network to stage regular boxing shows. Ali would have gotten maximum exposure on a national platform.

Shortly after Ali turned pro, there was talk that he was seeking a large signing bonus from any promoter interested in his services. But David Ali, who doesn't have a background in boxing and is advising his

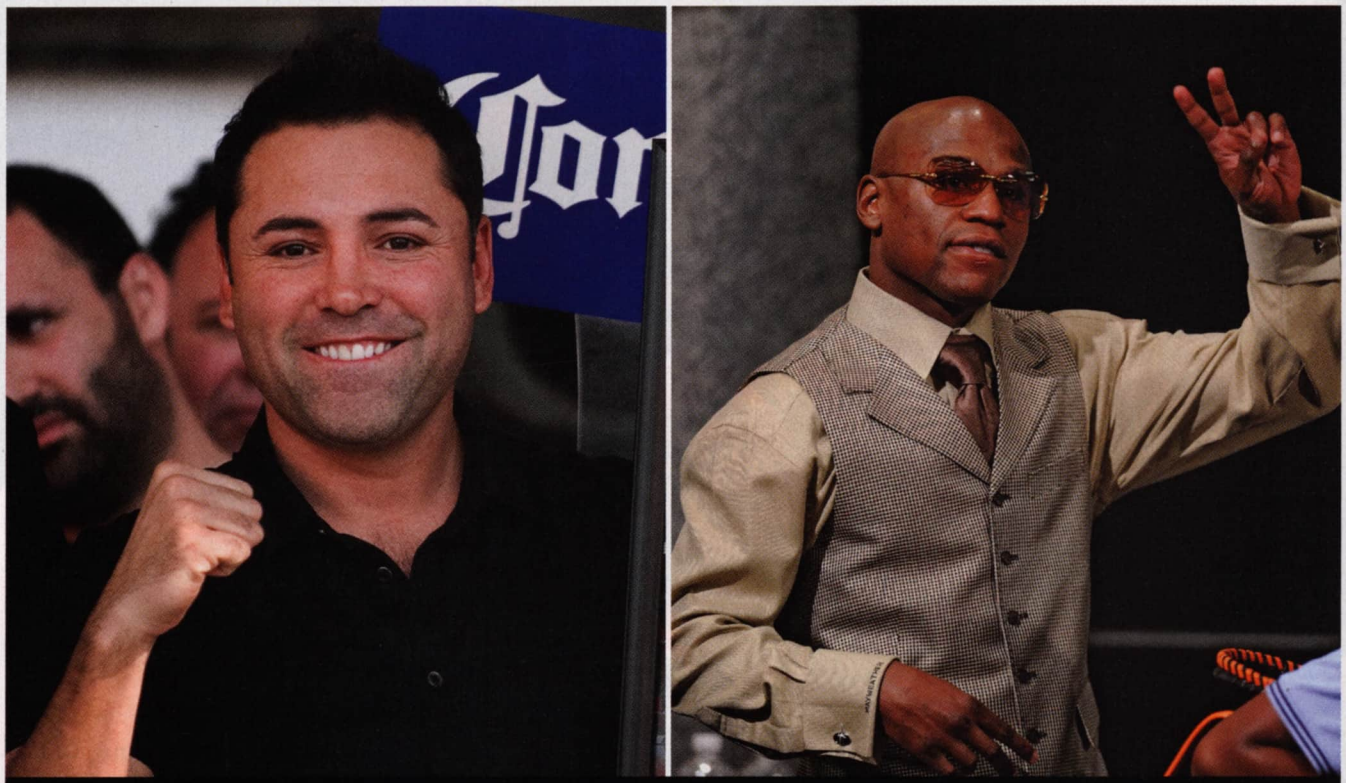
Sadam Ali (above and top) has always taken care of business inside the ring. Images: **Naoki Fukuda**

son, said that isn't the case. They simply want to find the best situation for his son to thrive professionally and financially. So they formed World Kid Promotions in March.

"Our intention is for Sadam to have his best interest taken care of in a contract with a promoter," he said. "We're talking about the number of years, his percentages, the international rights, things like that. He's the performer in the ring. He's the draw. He should get the proper share. How long can he continue boxing? The promoter continues long after the fighter is gone."

Ralph Petrillo of the New York State Athletic Commission said he didn't have a problem licensing World Kid Promotions even though Ali and his father had no background in the business.

"We were familiar with a lot of the people he had helping him,"



Oscar De La Hoya and **Floyd Mayweather Jr.** also started their own promotional firms but that came later in their careers. Images: **Ronaldo Schemidt-AFP-Getty Images** and **Ethan Miller-Getty Images**

Petrillo said. "We were comfortable enough with everything that we thought they could make a good show."

World Kid Promotions isn't about signing other boxers to help them establish their careers. It's all about moving Sadam Ali ahead.

"It was just frustrating for me, waiting to get fights as a free agent," Ali said. "I'm not a football player. I don't like standing on the sidelines. I like to be busy."

Schaefer said from the outside looking in the business of promoting fights looks "glamorous, lucrative and easy." In reality it is none of those things. It is a cutthroat business in which the big promoters vie for coveted television dates and lucrative pay-per-view slots and the smaller promoters join the fray.

A promoter is responsible for all aspects of the card. He must find a venue and make the matches on the card, which means securing and paying all the boxers. He tries to find a TV deal to help bear some of the financial burden. He has to pay for the pre-fight physicals for the boxers and the officials who work the show. If anything goes wrong — a fighter pulls out, tickets don't sale — the promoter is on the hook financially. Promoting a show is a huge financial risk.

When it comes to trying to build a boxer into the next Mayweather, Pacquiao or De La Hoya, it can be an expensive proposition that requires the patience of Job. That is why it is difficult for a prospect to take on the role of being a promoter.

David Ali, who runs a successful commercial real estate business in New York, said he is willing to invest whatever it takes to help his son become a superstar in the sport. They are looking at Sadam becoming the Arab-American version of De La Hoya. David Ali is trying to minimize the distractions of promoting for Sadam by hiring a staff for administrative duties. But Sadam still has to make appearances for sponsors and press conferences while he trains for fights.

As for finding that TV deal, David Ali says he met with someone from HBO and was nicely received, but in the end felt like they didn't take him seriously. The prosepcts for cable TV seem dim, so instead Ali is hoping to do something with an Internet outlet.

One shortcoming to promoting himself might be that Ali won't get the same gradation of opponents that other prospects get when they're moved along by another promoter. A matchmaker working for a boxer who promotes himself is not going to put the boxer in a tough match to test him. If the boxer loses, the matchmaker might find himself out of work.

Ali and his father considered their first promotion a success. A little over 800 people showed up for 24 rounds of boxing (four 4-round matches and Ali in an 8-round main

Jose Duran (left) lasted only 1:32 with **Sadam Ali** when they fought in 2010. Image: **Emily Harney**

event) on June 2. They plan to do another show on Oct. 27.

Felipe Gomez, a boxing promoter in Queens, acted as Ali's matchmaker for the card. He said three fights fell out in the final three days before the show, including one when a boxer couldn't pass a pre-fight MRI.

"I'm a promoter. I know the risks and the money you can lose," Gomez said. "A kid and his father taking this kind of chance and stepping up to promote their own shows is definitely courageous."

Many of those in attendance applauded Ali's courage for taking the step to move his own career forward.

"It's very ambitious," said Malignaggi. "Eventually he's going to need the help of a big time promoter. But he's building something now."

At the same time, Malignaggi said he probably wouldn't have struck out on the same course as Ali when he was starting out.

"There are pros and cons," he said. "The pros are that you get to build your own brand and you can definitely have a say in how you're presented. The cons are that in the early part of your career you definitely need a big time promoter who can give you that TV exposure. I hope he's successful. If this is the course he's chosen, I hope he can build on it." ■

INTERVIEW: KEN HERSHMAN

'SPORT IN FINE SHAPE'

By **Joseph Santoliquito**

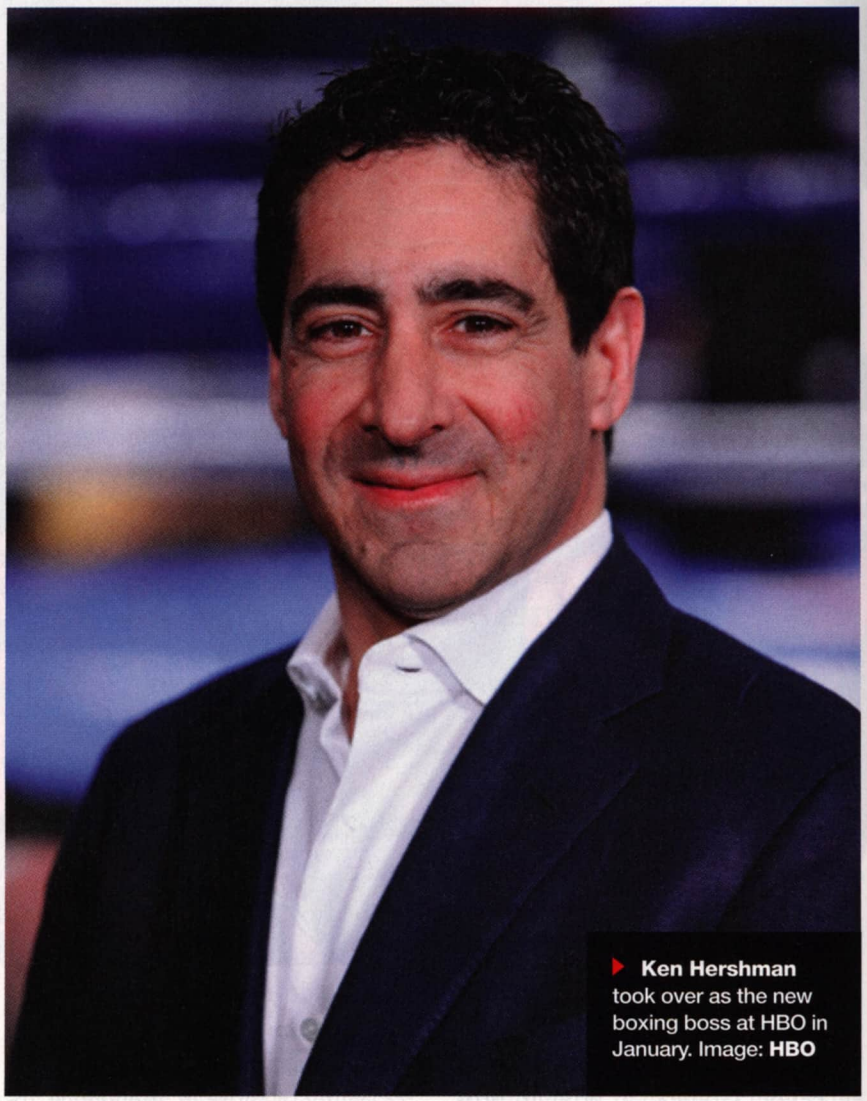
Ken Hershman was still getting settled six months into his new role as Sports president at HBO when THE RING stopped by to check in on one of the most powerful decision-makers in boxing.

Hershman has had to navigate a tumultuous early road, pocked with controversial results, fights being canceled when fighters tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs, and one of the world's best pound-for-pound fighters and the sport's top money maker going to jail. For Hershman, personally, he's gradually moving along, learning and absorbing HBO's vastness.

He seems to be handling it well.

Under Hershman, Jim Lampley launched his new show, *The Fight Game*, and he's been able to implement all of the various other little wrinkles he promised when he came over to HBO from a parallel post at Showtime.

"Boxing has taken some twists and turns since I've been here," said Hershman, "but that's the sport, and I think it's why the sport is so intriguing."



Ken Hershman took over as the new boxing boss at HBO in January. Image: **HBO**

THE RING: How has it been so far?

Ken Hershman: It's been six months since I started in January and it's been great. I'm really enjoying it. It's a big challenge and it's something I knew when I took the job, but I can honestly say that I'm having the time of my life. I like challenges.

THE RING: What's been the biggest surprise?

KH: I think the biggest surprise for me is the sheer size and scope of the HBO organization. It's much bigger than even I imagined and it's taken a while to figure all of that out. I'm still learning some names as I go along, and I'm partly figuring out the building and where things are, things like the basic necessities, where can I get paper and a stapler (*laughs*), and who works for me, who do I work with, and where sports fits in among the broader parameters for HBO.

THE RING: What did you think of the Manny Pacquiao-Tim Bradley fight?

Ken Hershman wants to see more of **Jim Lampley's** new boxing show on the network. Image: **Michael Loccisano-Getty Images**

KH: I wasn't shocked in terms of the actual fight itself. Everything I knew about Timothy Bradley I said before the fight. He always steps up and is a supremely talented fighter and athlete. So the way the fight played out did not surprise me at all. I was, however, very surprised by the decision. As well as Tim did, and don't get me wrong, Tim Bradley did exceptionally well, I did not think he won the fight. But this is boxing and odd things do happen in boxing. I didn't expect that decision, though.

THE RING: Do you think decisions like that hurt boxing?

KH: I think the reaction to the decision hurt boxing far more than the decision itself. I've seen far more egregious decisions than that. I wouldn't put it up there as the greatest robbery of all-time. But I know that's the way some people viewed it. The fight came down to the prerogative of the judges and what they saw. In the wake of that, most people have been curious as to what I believe happened, and I say that's what the judges saw, as opposed to feeling I have to defend the sport. The media outrage afterward, now that surprised me a bit. Most ordinary boxing fans can explain how a decision comes down, and they've seen many controversial decisions. They know the sport, and there were a number of respected people in the sport that made the case that Tim won the fight. He did come on strong in the end. But what happened? People were talking about boxing. People that usually don't talk about boxing.

THE RING: What has been the reaction to the new shows and boxing programming you're putting on?

KH: We're always obviously looking for new ways to expose our athletes and fights, and learning new ways to relate to the fans and interact with them. We want the fans to draw connections to these fighters and to make people more interested in these guys. A lot of people watching *24/7* and *Faceoff*, they don't always tune into the fight itself. But if they have something to connect to, they will.

Everything done at HBO comes with an expectation of quality, because we have the best people in the business creating this stuff. We're constantly looking for new ways to capture these things, and the *2 Days: Portrait of a Fighter* has

been a part of that we like. Before, *24/7* was a great outlet and a new way to introduce fighters like Tim Bradley to the fanbase. We'll continue to do them because that remains something we look at as really cool and something to broaden the sport.

THE RING: I have the sense you're very pleased with Jim Lampley's new show. Is there a chance that can be expanded?

KH: We are happy with Lampley's show. There is a chance to see more of them monthly in the future. I would like it to be more frequent. We're faced with challenges with scheduling and budgets, but as we're talking now, only two shows have been shown and they've been great. The first two shows have been really positive. We have no monthly plans at the moment, but the shows have been well received, and it's generating a nice audience for the network. It fills a niche that was absent. Fight fans can get a high level of information about the sport.

You saw it on the first show, where we were talking about the big issues and it's served as a great forum where people can express their opinions and defend their points of view. With telecasting a fight you don't have that luxury of time to break things down that we can on *Fight Game*. For example, we had Duane Ford on after the Pacquiao-Bradley fight, and he broke down the controversy and let the fans decide after that. It's a missing piece of programming for boxing that fans have been attracted to. But I can't take any credit there, because there were plans for *Fight Game* before I got here. But yes, we would like to expand. We have a couple of new initiatives to introduce our fights and our fighters and bring them to new levels.

THE RING: When we last spoke in February, upon getting the job at HBO, you mentioned a sell-by date in reference to a possible Pacquiao-Floyd Mayweather showdown. Where does that stand now?

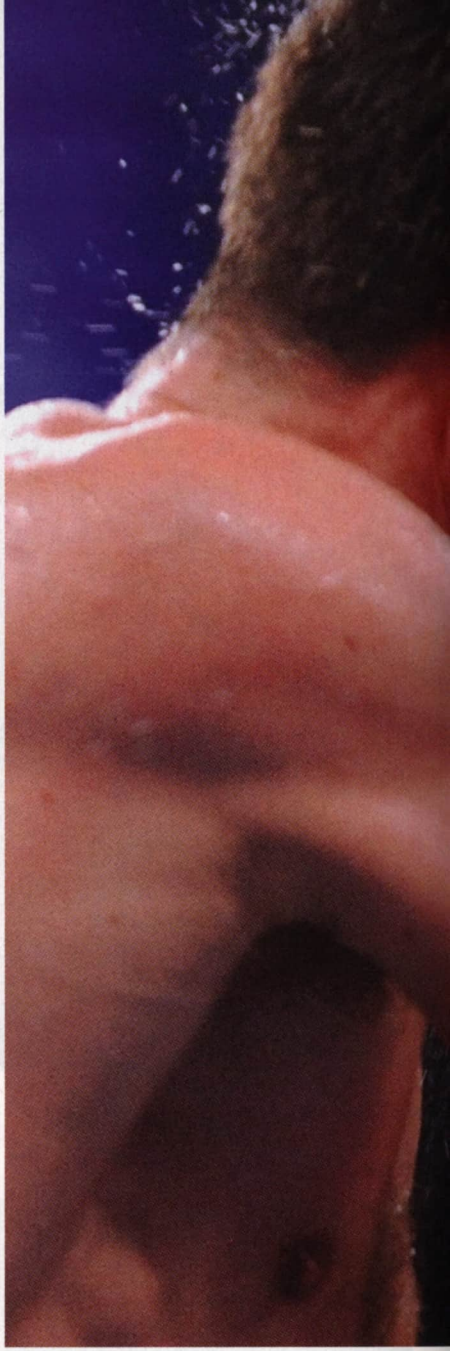
KH: I think it's still alive. Obviously to me, it would still be the biggest pay-per-view fight of all-time, and I still think it has a chance to be made. The vast majority of the populace thought Pacquiao won the Bradley fight, so in my opinion, that doesn't take back the quality of the Mayweather-Pacquiao fight. It's still a tough fight to make and it hasn't gotten any easier. I still maintain it would be a fun fight to do. In boxing, anything can happen. But the longer you can dangle it out before fans and not make it happen, the more things creep in, which makes it impossible to make. I'm still holding out that it will be made, but the window is closing fast.

THE RING: What young fighters would you like to continue building on HBO?

KH: We have a number of them coming up. It's an interesting summer with Adrien Broner, who we think is a dynamic fighter and a dynamic personality, and who we think can become a star. We still think Andre Ward is a budding star with his exposure growing. HBO has Ward-Chad Dawson and we will find out more about Ward after that. Mike Alvarado we'd like to see more of, and Seth Mitchell, we'd like to see him more, too. He's extremely athletic and extremely determined.

THE RING: What have you learned about yourself these first six months at HBO?

KH: The first six months, you learn that no matter how much boxing you've watched and no matter how many situations you experienced, there's always a new wrinkle. We saw that in the fight with James Kirkland and [Carlos] Molina. A guy gets knocked down and one of Molina's cornermen comes into the ring and Molina gets disqualified, and Molina was winning the fight [on two of three judge's scorecards after nine rounds].



It's always something interesting. It's what makes the sport compelling. You have to be patient and not react emotionally, and what's been important to me is not to get too high or too low. You learn to do what's best for the network and things will work out.

THE RING: And part of that success is that boxing continues to suc-

The fight between RING champions **Andre Ward** (right, against **Carl Froch**) and **Chad Dawson** on Sept. 8 will be televised on HBO. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

ceed, yet we heard again after the Bradley-Pacquiao fight that boxing was, once again, dead. How do you react to those brazen statements?

KH: Yes, I heard it. Boxing is supposedly dying (*laughs*). That's the thought that came to my mind after the Bradley-Pacquiao fight (*laughs*). Boxing is dead—question mark. When the top two fighters are fighting twice a year and generating the kind of income that they are, the health of the sport is strong in terms of viewership and PPV around the major fights. All of the support programming, and the success of *Fight Game* with Jim Lampley, tells us the sport is incredibly healthy and incredibly compelling. Check out the social media out there. Pacquiao-Bradley was trending very high the night of the fight.

That tells me the sport is in fine shape. Hopefully, people will finally start talking about the facts. Boxing isn't dying. The live gate for Pacquiao-Bradley was between $12-14 million, and Mayweather's live gate against [Miguel] Cotto was even bigger. That all speaks for itself. We had 10,000-plus for Julio Cesar Chavez's fight in El Paso, Texas. When the live gates are doing well, and the PPV is doing well, and TV fights on HBO are doing well, it's hard to say the sport is in trouble. Just look at the facts. That's all I ask before someone says or writes that boxing is dying. Just look at the facts: Boxing isn't dying. ■

EVANDER HOLYFIELD KNEW FEAR

THE BOXING WORLD ALWAYS BELIEVED THE FORMER HEAVYWEIGHT TITLEHOLDER WAS SUPREMELY CONFIDENT BEFORE HE FOUGHT MIKE TYSON THE FIRST TIME BUT HE HAD DOUBTS

By **Thomas Hauser**

Evander Holyfield had a degree of self doubt when he entered the ring to fight **Mike Tyson** for the first time. Image: **Al Bello-Getty Images**

It's part of boxing lore. On Nov. 9, 1996, Evander Holyfield shocked the world by knocking out Mike Tyson. Holyfield, it was said, went into the fight with absolute confidence and total belief in himself. "Tyson might frighten you guys," he told the media. "But he doesn't scare me. I've been everywhere he has except prison."

Except it turns out that things weren't that simple.

I was sitting with Holyfield on June 8 when Manny Pacquiao and Tim Bradley weighed in for their welterweight championship fight at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Pacquiao tipped the scales at 147 pounds, Bradley at 146. When it was time for the ritual staredown, Bradley moved into Pacquiao's space and postured aggressively.

Throughout fight week, Bradley had carried himself with an aura of confidence. Pacquiao, on the other hand, had seemed a bit somber. Thus, I was surprised when Holyfield said to me, "I think Pacquiao is more confident."

"Why do you say that?"

"Tim feels good right now," Holyfield answered. "But the night before a fight, when you're lying in bed and can't sleep, things change."

"Did you have trouble sleeping before a fight?"

Holyfield smiled.

"The night before I fought Tyson the first time was the worst."

Jack Dempsey famously said, "Fighters know fear. It's like a lump in your chest. You learn how to live with it. You don't talk about it and you try not to show it. But it's there."

This is what Evander told me about his state of mind before he fought Mike Tyson:

"No matter how much you believe in yourself, there's always some doubt. The night before Tyson, with all the talk I'd heard about how great he was and how there was no way I could possibly beat him, I must have got out of bed a hundred times.

"I shadow-boxed. I read the Bible. I went back to bed. I couldn't sleep. I got up again. Read the Bible some more. Shadow-boxed again. A lot of thoughts were going through my mind. The hardest fight I'd ever had was against Dwight Qawi. Fifteen rounds. I remember Qawi telling me during the fight, 'They sent a baby to do a man's job.' There was a time in that fight when all I wanted was to not get knocked out and make it to the end. I won but it took everything out of me.

"Tyson was bigger than Qawi. Tyson was stronger than Qawi. He hit harder than Qawi. At the Olympic trials, I was a light heavyweight and Tyson was a heavyweight. He was the only guy there who worked harder than me.

Evander Holyfield overcame his fears when he fought **Mike Tyson** in 1996, stopping him in 11 rounds. Image: **Al Bello-Getty Images**

"All I got was two, maybe three hours of sleep the night before I fought Tyson. The second time we fought, it was better. The whole day of the first fight, I was tired. I had a headache. I felt nauseous. Anybody can win if they don't get hit, but I knew I was gonna get hit. I said to myself that day, 'This will tell me who I am. Winners make it happen. Losers let it happen. I can't hope Tyson gets tired. I have to make him get tired. I have to show him, 'If you hit me, I'm gonna hit you back harder.'

"Fear stops you from doing what you have to do to win. Confidence is the key to being the best. It's how you feel about yourself that matters. The worst mistake I ever made in boxing was telling Lennox Lewis that I was going to knock him out in the third round the first time we fought. Because when he got through the third round, his confidence level went up to the sky.

"Walking to the ring for Tyson, I told myself, 'It's time to perform.' When I got in the ring, my legs felt weak. Like they were Jell-O. I was smiling, but it was an act. You can't stand there with your head down. You've got to make it look like, 'Hey, no problem.' I believed in myself. But I still had to make it happen, and I knew that Tyson wanted to make it happen differently.

"Then the bell rang, my legs came back, and I did my job." ■

Thomas Hauser can be reached by email at **thauser@rcn.com**. His newest book (*And the New ... : An Inside Look at Another Year in Boxing*) will be published later this summer by the University of Arkansas Press.

Evander Holyfield celebrates his stunning 11th-round knockout of **Mike Tyson** in 1996. Image: **Jed Jacobsohn-Getty Images**

COMPILED BY **MIKE COPPINGER**

The **Josesito Lopez** (right)-**Victor Ortiz** fight was an entertaining brawl while it lasted. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

JOSESITO LOPEZ TKO 9 VICTOR ORTIZ

DATE: JUNE 23, 2012
SITE: STAPLES CENTER, LOS ANGELES
DIVISION: WELTERWEIGHT
WEIGHTS: ORTIZ 146½; LOPEZ 144¾
RING RATING (GOING INTO FIGHT): ORTIZ NO. 3; LOPEZ UNRANKED
NETWORK: SHOWTIME

If one went on the appearance of their bodies at the weigh-in, Josesito Lopez didn't belong in the ring with Victor Ortiz.

Lopez was tabbed to replace Andre Berto after the latter failed a drug. Lopez turned out to be much more than just a replacement, though. His fighting heart proved to be too big for Ortiz, who quit on his stool with a badly-broken jaw following the ninth round of what had been a hotly-contested fight.

All three judges had Ortiz ahead at the time of stoppage: 88-83, 87-84 and 86-85.

The Ventura, Calif.-based southpaw said his jaw was first injured in the fifth round, the same round he put Lopez down with a rabbit punch. Lopez (30-4, 18 knockouts), an iron-chinned junior welterweight from Riverside, Calif., said giving up never entered his mind after receiving the foul punch.

Ortiz (29-4-2, 22 KOs) quit against Marcos Maidana three years ago in the same arena. Lopez, who fights with the same relentless passion as the Argentine slugger but with more polish, and his trainer Henry Ramirez believed that Ortiz would fold again if he were forced to fight as hard as he did against Maidana. They were right. It took nine rounds of back-and-forth exchanges to prove it but Lopez showed the world he was the more willing fighter.

"I knew I had to fight the fight of my life to win," Lopez said. "I knew I caught him with good punches in every round, and I hurt him with more than a few of them. I knew the longer the fight went, the better chance I had to win it. I chopped him down."

Ortiz, who had already agreed before he fought Lopez to challenge WBC 154-pound titleholder Saul Alvarez in a pay-per-view main event on Sept. 15, did not have much to say after the loss.

"Yeah, Josesito busted my jaw," he said. "I had my mouth open, and he broke my jaw. I couldn't close my mouth. It happened early in (the fight). My corner wanted me to continue, and I just couldn't."

One has to wonder how Ortiz's career, already damaged after stoppage losses to Maidana and Floyd Mayweather Jr., will evolve after his latest disappointment.

Lopez, who felt disrespected by Ortiz's choice to take the Alvarez fight before they fought and by the headbutt Ortiz delivered during their weigh-in staredown, said, "Victor has no heart."

Lopez fought the second half of the Ortiz bout peering through bruised and swollen eye sockets. He may not be the most gifted boxer out there but no one will ever question *his* heart.

–Doug Fischer

Danny Garcia (left) changed his fight against **Amir Khan** with this monstrous left to the neck. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

DANNY GARCIA TKO 4 AMIR KHAN

DATE: JULY 14, 2012
SITE: MANDALAY BAY RESORT & CASINO, LAS VEGAS
DIVISION: JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT
WEIGHTS: KHAN 139; GARCIA 139
RING RATING (GOING INTO FIGHT): KHAN NO. 1; GARCIA NO. 2
NETWORK: HBO

Danny Garcia shocked the world with a knockout of Amir Khan to win the vacant RING junior welterweight championship in an electric four-round shootout.

Garcia dropped the 7-to-1 favorite with a hellacious left hook to the neck in the third round and then twice more in a thrilling fourth round, in which the fighters slugged it out.

Referee Kenny Bayless allowed Khan to absorb more haymakers during the fourth because Khan (26-3, 18 KOs) gamely fired back and landed his share of power shots, but when the 2004 Olympic silver medalist was knocked to the canvas again, Bayless waved the fight off at 2:28 of the round.

"It wasn't my night," said Khan. "After watching the replays, I saw I was coming in with my hands down and Danny took advantage. I respect Danny. He was countering very well against me. I got a little complacent, and he took advantage and he caught me."

The 24-year-old Philadelphian says he knew he had the heart and style to beat Khan and was convinced he could score an early knockout.

"I always knew I was going to win this fight," said Garcia (24-0, 14 KOs). "I needed a great fighter in front of me to show how good I am. Now everyone knows.

"We knew Khan would come out fast because he didn't think I had power. I stepped up and used my speed and power and it worked. I was going to fight to the death, just like he did."

Garcia's battle with Khan might be considered a Fight of the Year by some fans. It certainly produced a front-runner for Round of the Year.

Garcia firmly established himself as one of the top 140-pound fighters in the world. Khan will once again have to rebuild his career after a knockout loss.

–Doug Fischer

David Haye landed some huge shots against Dereck Chisora in the fifth and final round. Image: Scott Heavey-Getty Images

DAVID HAYE TKO 5 DERECK CHISORA

DATE: JULY 14, 2012
SITE: UPTON PARK, LONDON
DIVISION: HEAVYWEIGHT
WEIGHTS: HAYE 210; CHISORA 247
RING RATING (GOING INTO FIGHT): BOTH FIGHTERS UNRATED
NETWORK: EPIX (U.S.); BOXNATION (U.K.)

David Haye made a dramatic return to the heavyweight scene by stopping Dereck Chisora in the fifth round of an intriguing fight that delighted a rain-soaked crowd of 32,000.

Haye, 31, decided from the outset to make this a dogfight, perhaps because of all the criticism he attracted in his previous, safety-first outing against Wladimir Klitschko just over a year earlier. Or perhaps it was the notorious press conference brawl that followed Chisora's gritty loss to Vitali Klitschko that encouraged Haye to take chances in an event fought under the auspices of the Luxembourg Boxing Federation (because the British Board had suspended Chisora).

Haye (26-2, 24 KOs) stood in the pocket and traded, relying on his sharp reflexes and quick hands to give him the edge. Chisora, 28, fought behind a high guard, trying to bull his way in to land his thumping blows on his fellow Londoner.

But, rather surprisingly, Chisora could not push the lighter man around in the frequent mauls and clinches, and whenever he opened up, he found himself being countered effectively. The result was that Haye was the busier fighter, outlanding Chisora 2-1.

Haye went straight into attack in the opening round, using his reflexes to slip most of the in-coming flak, a pattern that continued in the second. Haye took a few solid punches but the most-telling punch of the round was a right from Haye that momentarily shook Chisora.

Haye's marked edge in speed proved decisive, although Chisora still looked dangerous whenever he opened up.

Late in the fifth, Haye countered with a high-powered left hook that landed below the ear, and he punctuated it with a right cross as Chisora fell. The big man, who had survived the best that Klitschko, Fury and Helenius could dish out without a wobble, fell heavily for the first time in his career. He made it up at eight but Haye is a fine finisher and he ended the night with a three-punch combination concluded by another brutal left hook. Chisora (15-4, 9 KOs) rose at nine, but he was wobbly, and referee Luis Pabon (Puerto Rico) was right to wave it off at the 2.59 mark.

Afterward, men who had once exchanged so much vitriol embraced and complimented each other, after which Haye lost no time to call out Vitali Klitschko once again.

"I've sent out a very scary message," said Haye, the former RING cruiserweight champion. "I'll be surprised if Vitali Klitschko wants to fight me after that. He will no doubt try to fight some chump and then retire to be a politician."

–Gavin Evans

Jermell Charlo (left) ended his fight against **Denis Douglin** with this big right in the fifth round. Image: **Jeff Gross-Getty Images**

KAZUTO IOKA UD 12 AKIRA YAEGASHI

In Japan's first-ever unification bout, Kazuto Ioka edged Akira Yaegashi in an excellent action fight June 20 in Osaka to annex the WBA and WBC strawweight titles.

Ioka won by razor-thin margins of 115-113, 115-114 and 115-114.

Yaegashi (15-3, 8 KOs) pressed the action early on, being the more active of the two. But a counter right hand from Ioka changed the climate of the bout dramatically in the third. The shot caused caused Yaegashi's left eye to swell gruesomely and by the fifth round it was closed.

With Yaegashi in danger of losing by TKO due to the cut, the 29-year-old from Yokohama fought with a sense of urgency. But Ioka (10-0, 6 KOs) began to take advantage of the eye, as he dialed in and repeatedly targeted the swollen mess.

Most of the rounds were close, but judges seemed to favor Ioka's strong jab and body punching. The 23-year-old native of Osaka is now THE RING's No. 1 rated strawweight; Yaegashi is rated No. 10.

JERMELL CHARLO KO 5 DENIS DOUGLIN

The bout was a pugilistic rarity: two under-25 prospects head-to-head. That such a high-risk fight was taking place at this early stage of their careers was a surprise. That Jermell Charlo firmly established himself as one of top prospects in the sport was not.

Charlo aced the toughest test of his career with a highlight-reel fifth-round knockout of Denis Douglin in a junior middleweight bout June 23 in Los Angeles. Charlo sought to keep the 22-year-old Marlboro, N.J., resident at the end of his educated jab. The taller and rangier fighter, he kept distance throughout. Douglin (14-2, 8 KOs), naturally, worked to get inside, as he applied pressure and threw body shots.

Charlo (18-0, 9 KOs) seemed to score a knockdown toward the end of the second round, as the ropes held Douglin up after a series of shots, though no such call was made.

Charlo ended matters in the fifth round, putting Douglin down hard (twice) with a single combination. The 22-year-old Houston-based fighter landed a

Lucas Matthysse (right) had no trouble finding the target in his knockout victory over **Humberto Soto**. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

jab followed by a straight right down the pipe, which dropped Douglin. Douglin got to his feet briefly before falling a second and final time, as he was counted out at 1:12 by referee Wayne Hedgepeth.

It was the second time Douglin has been stopped, his only other career defeat coming against Doel Carrasquillo in February 2011.

LUCAS MATTHYSSE TKO 5 HUMBERTO SOTO

Before his Showtime-televised bout with Humberto Soto, Lucas Matthysse confidently stated: "I will not allow the judges to rob me of victory this time." He kept his promise — emphatically.

After razor-thin decision losses to Zab Judah and Devon Alexander — fights which observers felt could have gone either way — Matthysse authored the signature win of his career, blasting through Soto in five rounds on the Victor Ortiz-Josesito Lopez card June 23 in Los Angeles.

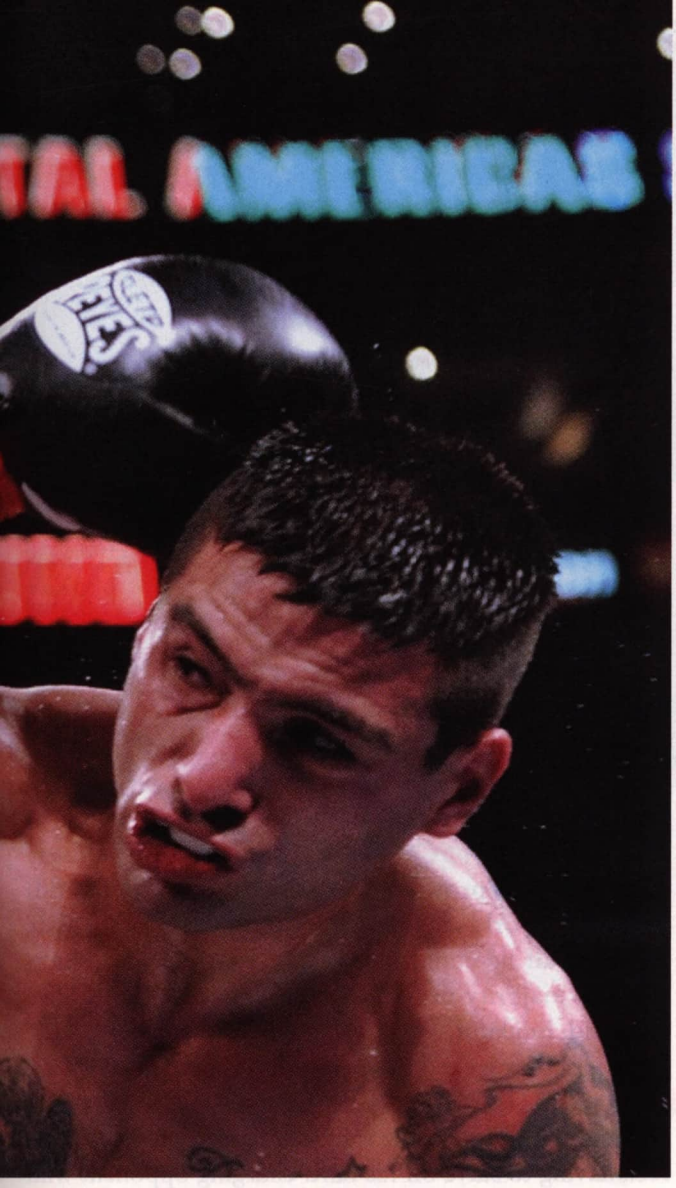
Soto (58-8-2, 34 KOs) came out firing from angles at the 29-year-old Argentine, looking to offset his foe's power. Matthysse sought to methodically break Soto down.

There were some heated exchanges in the second round, which were amplified in the following frame. Matthysse (31-2, 29 KOs) began to load up, as he pounded at the 32-year-old Mexican's midsection.

Soto was the sharper puncher, but Matthysse landed the heavier shots and they were starting to take their toll.

In the waning moments of the fifth round, Soto was dropped for the first time in his 68-bout pro career. A devastating three-punch combo (two overhand rights, followed by a straight right) inflicted the damage. Soto beat referee Raul Caiz Sr.'s count, but was clearly not fit to continue. Soto's corner wisely stopped the bout following the round.

Matthysse considerably raised his profile with the thrilling TV victory and is now rated No. 1 by THE RING at 140 behind champion Danny Garcia.



CORNELIUS BUNDRAGE KO 7 CORY SPINKS

Cornelius Bundrage retained his IBF junior middleweight title with a second victory over Cory Spinks, a dominating seventh-round beatdown of the former lineal welterweight champion on June 30 in Indio, Calif.

It looked as if it might be an early night when Bundrage dropped Spinks with a looping overhand right in the opening round. Spinks survived the round by holding so vociferiously that he received a warning from the referee.

Bundrage, a 39-year-old Detroit native, put Spinks down for the second time in the opening moments of the seventh round with a big overhand right. After Spinks got to his feet, Bundrage chased him around the ring and caught him with a wide lunging right. Spinks (39-7, 11 KOs) was on wobbly legs as Bundrage tried to finish him. THE RING's No. 8 junior middleweight let his hands go as he stalked the 34-year-old St. Louis native, even catching Spinks with a few low blows that weren't seen by referee Ray Corona.

Bundrage (32-4, 19 KOs) finally caught Spinks with another right, prompting Corona to end the fight at 2:32 of the seventh. In their first meeting, in August 2010, the former Contender star stopped Spinks in the fifth.

NONITO DONAIRE UD 12 JEFFREY MATHEBULA

Nonito Donaire keeps on winning, though his performances may not always live up to the high expectations he set for himself with two rousing RING Magazine Knockout of the Year displays.

He dropped Jeffrey Mathebula (26-4-2, 14 KOs) with a crushing counter left hook in the fourth but couldn't finish the 5-foot-11 South African on July 7 in Carson, Calif. The knockdown did answer an important question: "The Filipino Flash" has indeed carried his power to 122 pounds.

Donaire (29-1, 18 KOs) overcame a 5½-inch height disadvantage to defeat Mathebula by scores of 119-108, 118-109 and 117-110 and add Mathebula's IBF title to the WBO belt he already owned.

Donaire, 29, cracked Mathebula's tooth in the bout and repeatedly snapped his head back with power shots. The rangy 33-year-old pumped his jab and tried to control range as Donaire stalked for most of the bout, looking for the knockout that has eluded him in recent bouts.

Mathebula, rated No. 6 by THE RING at 122, gave a good account of himself but couldn't deal with Donarie's array of speed and power.

THE RING's No. 3 junior featherweight did good work on the inside against a big man, showing he belongs at 122. He looks ahead to a probable fall clash with Jorge Arce.

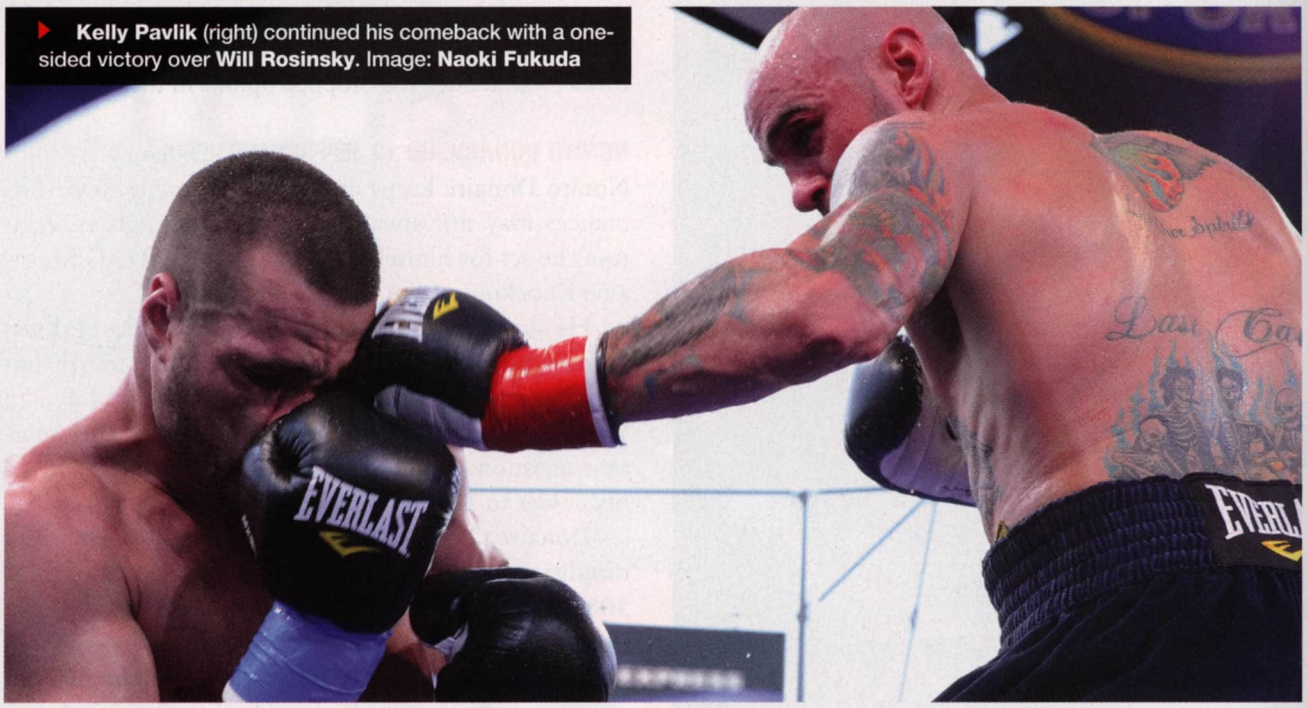
KELLY PAVLIK UD 10 WILL ROSINSKY

Kelly Pavlik continued his comeback on July 7 with a dominating decision victory over game Will Rosinsky on the Nonito Donaire-Jeffrey Mathebula card in Carson, Calif. The scores were 98-91, 97-92 and 98-91.

It was Pavlik's fourth consecutive victory since dropping THE RING middleweight championship to Sergio Martinez in April 2010.

"The Ghost" is now campaigning as a super middleweight, as he hopes to secure a big fight this fall. He kept himself in line for one with his performance against Rosinsky (16-2, 9 KOs), who is best known for his fight with Edwin Rodriguez on ShoBox last year. He dropped his foe to a knee in the second round with a short right and controlled the pace of the bout.

But Pavlik (40-2, 34 KOs) had to work for his victory. He suffered a deep gash below his left eyebrow from a Rosinsky shot in the fourth that dripped blood over his face. The 27-year-old New York City firefighter and EMT gave Pavlik problems with his head movement



Kelly Pavlik (right) continued his comeback with a one-sided victory over **Will Rosinsky**. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

and speed, though he was at a noticeable size disadvantage. Pavlik, from Youngstown, Ohio, won the fight by landing the heavier shots.

The bout was Pavlik's first HBO appearance since the loss to Martinez.

WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO TKO 6 TONY THOMPSON

Wladimir Klitschko knocked out Tony Thompson in the summer of 2008. The big Ukrainian had an easier time in the rematch, needing just six rounds to dispatch the American and retain his RING heavyweight title July 7 in Berne, Switzerland.

A jab, followed by a straight right dropped the 40-year-old Washington, D.C. fighter in the corner toward the end of round five. Thompson survived the round, but Klitschko ended matters in the following frame. Klitschko pushed Thompson into a corner and landed a barrage, which put Thompson down in a heap. Thompson beat the count on unsteady legs and seemed to have no interest in continuing as referee Sam Williams waved it off at 2:56 of round six.

Thompson (36-3, 24 KOs) landed nary a punch in the contest: He connected on just 25 punches in the entire fight, according to punch stats. Klitschko (58-3, 51 KOs) won the earlier rounds based purely on activity.

Thompson entered as THE RING's No. 10 heavyweight but exited following the uninspired performance. The younger Klitschko brother weighed in at 249 for the fight — the heaviest of his career. He has pretty much cleaned out the division, with no viable foe in sight.

KELL BROOK MD 12 CARSON JONES

Carson Jones (34-9-2, 24 KOs) may not have a glossy record, but he proved to Kell Brook (and the world) that he's a world-class fighter. Jones gave Brook (28-0, 18 KOs) all he could handle but came up just short, losing a majority decision on July 7 in Brook's native Sheffield, England.

The scores were 114-114, 116-113 and 115-113.

Brook, THE RING's No. 3 welterweight, was pushed to the brink in by far the toughest fight of his young career, having to stave off his hard-charging opponent with a badly broken nose. However, it was a valuable learning experience as he faced adversity and prospered in the end.

The budding British star was the faster and slicker fighter and avoided most of Jones' heavy shots over the first half of the fast-paced bout. Jones, from Tulsa, Okla., came on late, though. He bludgeoned Brook's nose in the eighth round, causing Brook to swallow a lot of blood.

Jones wore down the exhausted Brook and hurt him in the final frame, but Brook finished the fight on his feet. Jones' winning streak (all by knockout) was snapped at eight.

ANDREW FONFARA UD 10 GLEN JOHNSON

Popular veteran Glen Johnson announced his retirement after he lost a unanimous decision to Andrew Fonfara on July 13 in Fonfara's hometown of Chicago on ESPN's Friday Night Fights. The scores were 97-93, 99-91 and 97-93.

It was Johnson's third consecutive loss and his fifth in seven fights.

Toshiyuki Igarashi (right) won THE RING flyweight title by narrowly outpointing **Sonny Boy Jaro**. Image: **Toshifumi Kitamura-AFP-Getty Images**

The former RING light heavyweight champion and THE RING's 2004 "Fighter of the Year," Johnson called it a career at 43. The native of Jamaica had success early on with power shots and jabs but faded down the stretch, showing his age. Johnson's best round was the second, in which he stunned Fonfara with a few big shots. Fonfara answered in-kind the following frame with a looping overhand right which staggered Johnson.

Johnson (51-17-2, 35 KOs) seemed gassed by the eighth, rarely throwing and mostly covering up. Fonfara (22-2, 12 KOs) took advantage of the man 19 years his senior and closed the fight strongly with combination punching to secure the most-important victory of his career. The native of Poland has won 12 consecutive fights since his last defeat, a KO loss to Derrick Findley in 2008.

TOSHIYUKI IGARASHI SD 12 SONNY BOY JARO

Toshiyuki Igarashi (16-1-1, 10 KOs) of Japan survived the wild punches of Filipino champ Sonny Boy Jaro to earn a hard-fought split decision and capture the RING and WBC flyweight belts on July 16 in Saitama, Japan.

It was a typical boxer-puncher confrontation, with Igarashi boxing and Jaro (34-11-5, 24 KOs) infighting before 5,800 spectators.

David Mendoza (U.S.) and Kyongha Shin (Korea) saw the give-and-take fight 116-112 and 115-113 for the fast-moving Igarashi, while Luis Escalona (U.S.) had it 116-112 for the hard-hitting Jaro.

The muscular Filipino, four inches shorter than Igarashi, had stunned the world in March with a sixth-round knockout upset of Thai legend Pongsaklek Wonjongkam in Thailand.

"Jaro could really punch," said Igarashi, who claimed his first major title. "He was the hardest hitter that I've ever met, but I overcame it with my will power."

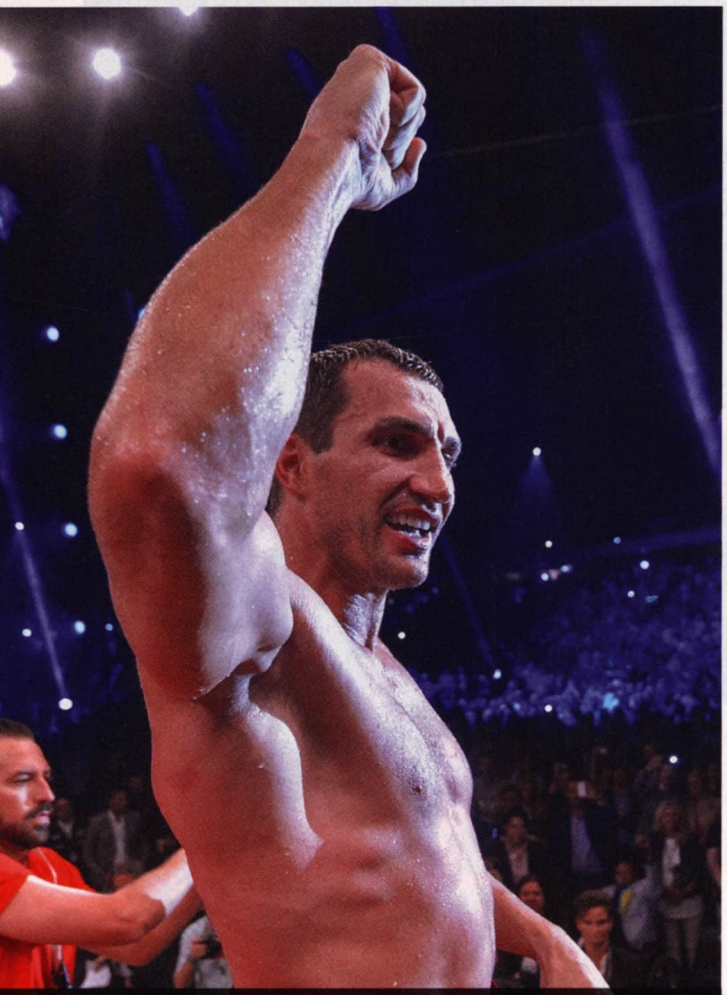
Igarashi, 28, who fought with a bad cut over his left eye in the last few rounds, won his ninth straight bout. Jaro, 30, saw his win streak snapped at five bouts.

Igarashi, a 2004 Olympian, wept after losing his first contest in Athens, but was jubilant after capturing the world title in Japan. ■

–Joe Koizumi

FIGHT RESULTS

THROUGH JULY 16, 2012



Wladimir Klitschko's big right was too much for Tony Thompson. Image: Fabrice Coffrini-AFP-Getty Images

HEAVYWEIGHTS

DEONTAY WILDER KO 3 OWEN BECK
TONY GRANO KO 4 DAVARRYL WILLIAMSON
TIMUR IBRAGIMOV W 12 WISEMAN DLOMO
SHERMAN WILLIAMS W 12 CHAUNCY WELLIVER
JASON ESTRADA W 8 ALEX GONZALES
ARTUR SZPILKA W 10 JAMEEL MCCLINE
SHANE CAMERON KO 4 MONTE BARRETT
MAGOMED ABDUSALAMOV KO 2 MAURICE BYARM
WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO KO 6 TONY THOMPSON
TYSON FURY KO 5 VINNY MADDALONE
ANDY RUIZ JR KO 8 JONTE WILLIS
DAVID HAYE KO 5 DERECK CHISORA

CRUISERWEIGHTS

GRIGORY DROZD KO 1 FABIO GARRIDO
HARRY SIMON KO 1 RUBEN GROENEWALD
DMYTRO KUCHER KO 2 CESAR CRENZ
WILLIAM BEZERRA KO 6 MANOEL DE SOUZA
LAUDELINO BARROS W 12 JULIO CESAR DOS SANTOS
ROY JONES JR W 10 PAWEL GLAZEWSKI
TONY CONQUEST KO 1 LEON WILLIAMS

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

GAYRAT AHMEDOV W 10 KAREN AVETISYAN
YUSAF MACK W 6 SABOU BALLOGOU
ANDREW FONFARA W 10 GLEN JOHNSON
CORNELIUS WHITE W 12 DMITRY SUKHOTSKY

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

GIOVANNI DE CAROLIS KO 8 ATTILA BARAN
KELLY PAVLIK W 10 WILL ROSINSKY
PABLO FARIAS KO 4 ALVARO ENRIQUEZ
MARCO ANTONIO PERIBAN KO 9 LESTER GONZALEZ

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

JERMELL CHARLO KO 5 DENIS DOUGLIN
MARCO ANTONIO RUBIO KO 7 JORGE COTA
BILLI GODOY W 12 JORGE HEILAND
GRZEGORZ PROKSA KO 8 KERRY HOPE
PATRICK MAJEWSKI KO 5 CHRIS FITZPATRICK
ANTHONY MUNDINE KO 7 BRONCO MCKART
FERNANDO GUERRERO W 10 JOSE MEDINA
J'LEON LOVE W 8 JOSEPH DE LOS SANTOS

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

SEBASTIEN MADANI W 12 JOSE DEL RIO
JOEY HERNANDEZ KO 4 BRANDON BAUE
OMAR HENRY W 10 TYRONE SELDERS
STEVE HEREMAIA KO 1 LEE OTI
ERISLANDY LARA W 10 FREDDY HERNANDEZ
CORNELIUS BUNDRAGE KO 7 CORY SPINKS
KING DAVIDSON KO 2 JOSEPH LAMPTEY
JESUS SOTO KARASS KO 5 EURI GONZALEZ
MICHEL SORO KO 1 MAGOMED ABDURAKHMANOV

WELTERWEIGHTS

JOSESITO LOPEZ KO 9 VICTOR ORTIZ
VICTOR CAYO KO 1 JOSE RODRIGUEZ
RAFAL JACKIEWICZ W 10 LUCA MICHAEL PASQUA
KELL BROOK W 12 CARSON JONES
LEE PURDY KO 1 CHRIS JOHNSON
BRAD SOLOMON W 8 HECTOR MUNOZ

Cornelius Bundrage (left) stopped **Cory Spinks** in seven rounds. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

AKINORI WATANABE KO 6 KAZUKAZE YAMAKAWA
JOSE LUIS CASTILLO KO 8 IVAN POPOCA
LEONARD BUNDU TECH. WIN 5 STEFANO CASTELLUCCI
PHIL LO GRECO KO 1 BRANDON HOSKINS

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
KHABIB ALLAKHVERDIEV KO 4 KAIZER MABUZA
LUCAS MATTHYSSE KO 5 HUMBERTO SOTO
OMAR FIGUEROA KO 1 ALAIN HERNANDEZ
MIKE DALLAS JR KO 6 JAVIER CASTRO
VIKTOR POSTOL W 12 YVAN MENDY
SHINYA IWABUCHI W 10 TSUYOSHI OZAWA
RUSLAN PROVODNIKOV KO 2 JOSE REYNOSO
ROBERTO ORTIZ KO 5 ABRAHAM GOMEZ
ANTONIO OROZCO KO 3 ALBERTO CRUZ
SOLOMON EGBERIME W 12 JOEL DELA CRUZ
WALTER CASTILLO W 10 MOISES SOLIS
CESAR CUENCA W 12 CLAUDIO OLMEDO
DANNY GARCIA KO 4 AMIR KHAN

LIGHTWEIGHTS
JOHN MOLINA W 8 MIGUEL MUNGUIA
ANGELO SANTANA KO 3 JUSTIN SAVI
MICHAEL PEREZ KO 2 ERIC CRUZ
RENE GONZALEZ KO 2 ABDIEL RAMIREZ

EDGAR PUERTA KO 4 WINSTON CAMPOS
JOSE GONZALEZ KO 2 JOSEPH LARYEA
GAVIN REES KO 9 DERRY MATHEWS
ABNER COTTO KO 8 JUAN MONTIEL

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
JONATHAN BARROS W 10 GUSTAVO BERMUDEZ
JAVIER FORTUNA KO 2 CRISTOBAL CRUZ
FERMIN DE LOS SANTOS KO 6 MIGUEL PIEDRAS
MONTY MEZA CLAY W 8 EMMANUEL LUCERO
TAKASHI UCHIYAMA D 3 MICHAEL FARENAS

FEATHERWEIGHTS
GARY RUSSELL JR KO 3 CHRISTOPHER PEREZ
BILLY DIB W 10 JUAN ANTONIO RODRIGUEZ
(F) ALEJANDRA OLIVERAS KO 5 MIGDALIA ASPRILLA
MIGUEL MARRIAGA KO 9 ALEJANDRO DELGADO

Gary Russell Jr. landed this face-altering right during his third-round knockout of **Christopher Perez.** Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

RANDY CABALLERO KO 5 JAMAL PARRAM
ROLI GASCA KO 1 JR MENDOZA
RICO RAMOS W 8 EFRAIN ESQUIVIAS
DAIKI KAMEDA KO 4 JOVANNY SOTO
CHRISTOPHER MARTIN KO 6 ROBERTO CASTANEDA
CRISTIAN MIJARES W 10 EUSEBIO OSEJO
(F) ANIYA SEKI W 10 EVA MARCU
NONITO DONAIRE W 12 JEFFREY MATHEBULA
SHINGO WAKE W 8 JONATHAN BA AT
YUKINORI OGUNI W 12 MASAAKI SERIE
HORACIO GARCIA W 10 ADOLFO LANDEROS
WILLIE CASEY W 12 JASON BOOTH

BANTAMWEIGHTS

ANDRES GUTIERREZ KO 9 ONALVI SIERRA
(F) YAZMIN RIVAS W 10 NYDIA FELICIANO
FELIPE ORUCUTA KO 2 RICHARD GARCIA
PUNGLUANG SOR SINGYU KO 5 RICARDO ROA
RYOSUKE IWASA KO 7 KENTARO MASUDA
HUGO RUIZ KO 9 JEAN SAMPSON
LEE HASKINS W 12 STUART HALL
DAISUKE FURUHASHI KO 7 AKINORI HOSHINO
(F) SUSIE RAMADAN W 10 USANAKORN KOKIETGYM
(F) JANETH PEREZ W 10 RIYO TOGO
TOMAS ROJAS KO 4 MANUEL HERRERA

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

DAVID SANCHEZ KO 2 ELIECER QUEZADA
SRISAKET SOR RUNGVISAI KO 2 LIONEL MARK DURAN
PAUL BUTLER W 10 ASHLEY SEXTON
(F) CAROLINA DUER KO 5 CORINA CARLESCU
YOTA SATO W 12 SYLVESTER LOPEZ
(F) NAOKO YAMAGUCHI W 10 TENKAI TSUNAMI
OLEYDONG SITHSAMERCHAI KO 8 RYAN BITO
HERNAN MARQUEZ W 10 FERNANDO LUMACAD

Sonny Boy Jaro (left) put up a good fight but fell short against **Toshiyuki Igarashi**, losing his RING belt in the process. Image: Toshifumi Kitamura-AFP-Getty Images

FLYWEIGHTS
JUAN ESTRADA KO 2 ARDIN DIALE
OSCAR BLANQUET KO 1 WARS KATSUMATA
RUSALEE SAMOR KO 6 JOHAN WAHYUDI
(F) AVA KNIGHT W 10 SUSANA VAZQUEZ
(F) ARELY MUCINO KO 2 ANA FERNANDEZ
JULIAN RIVERA W 12 EDGAR JIMENEZ
(F) MARIANA JUAREZ W 10 SHINDO GO
TOSHIYUKI IGARASHI W 12 SONNY BOY JARO

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS
RYO MIYAZAKI W 12 MICHAEL LANDERO
(F) ESMERALDA MORENO W 10 NAOMI TOGASHI
NETHRA SASIPRAPA W 12 GEBOI MANSALAYAO
YUKI CHINEN W 10 CRISON OMAYAO

STRAWWEIGHTS
KAZUTO IOKA W 12 AKIRA YAEGASHI
MARIO RODRIGUEZ KO 4 ARMANDO VAZQUEZ
(F) SU-YUN HONG W 10 TEERAPORN PANNIMIT
(F) KATIA GUTIERREZ W 10 SUSANA PEREZ
JESUS SILVESTRE W 12 EDWIN DIAZ

Layla McCarter (left, against Shadina Pennybaker) might be the best female boxer on the planet. Image: Chris Cozzone

CREAM OF THE CROP

THE BEST THREE FIGHTERS IN EACH DIVISION, PART II

By David A. Avila

Last month, we gave you Part I of our two-part series in which we name the best three women fighters in each weight class. We started with the lighter divisions.

This month, in Part II, we pick up where we left off.

LIGHTWEIGHTS

LAYLA MCCARTER
COUNTRY: U.S. (Las Vegas)
AGE: 33
HEIGHT: 5-5
RECORD: 34-13-5 (7 KOs)
SUMMARY: McCarter is possibly the finest female boxer today. She exhibits tremendous boxing skills and is one of a handful of women with more than 50 professional fights. McCarter has fought numerous times outside of the U.S. and in states other than Nevada.

MELISSA HERNANDEZ
COUNTRY: U.S. (Miami Beach)
AGE: 32
HEIGHT: 5-3
RECORD: 16-3-3 (6 KOs)
SUMMARY: Hernandez lost a decision to Erica Farias last December in Argentina. It's almost impossible to beat Argentine judges. Hernandez is a feisty and very skilled boxer who will fight anyone, anywhere, at any time and has wins over several elite fighters. That includes Lisa Brown and Jelena Mrdjenovich.

ERIN MCGOWAN
COUNTRY: Australia
AGE: 31
HEIGHT: 5-8
RECORD: 14-1 (7 KOs)
SUMMARY: McGowan lost a close majority decision to Monica Acosta in Acosta's native Argentina, evidence that she is willing to test her skills outside of her comfort zone. She performed well in only her second significant test.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

CHEVELLE HALLBACK
COUNTRY: U.S. (Tampa, Fla.)
AGE: 40
HEIGHT: 5-7
RECORD: 28-8-2 (11 KOs)
SUMMARY: Hallback has lost her last two fights but both were in other countries. She has slowed down with age but still has the boxing skills to beat anybody with fair judging.

HOLLY HOLM
COUNTRY: U.S. (Albuquerque)
AGE: 30
HEIGHT: 5-8
RECORD: 31-2-3 (9 KOs)
SUMMARY: The southpaw is very athletic but doesn't have polished boxing skills. Almost all of her wins have taken place in New Mexico. Her willingness to fight heavier opponents is a credit to her competitiveness. She lost by knockout to Anne Sophie Mathis but avenged the setback by out-pointing the Frenchwoman in a rematch.

ESTHER PHIRI
COUNTRY: Zambia
AGE: 25
HEIGHT: N/A
RECORD: 13-1-2 (5 KOs)
SUMMARY: Phiri has fought outside of her native Zambia and owns wins over Belinda Laracuente and Lely Luz Florez. Phiri also beat Duda Yankovich and fought the dangerous Terri Blair to a draw.

WELTERWEIGHTS

ANNE SOPHIE MATHIS
COUNTRY: France
AGE: 34
HEIGHT: 5-11
RECORD: 26-2 (22 KOs)
SUMMARY: Mathis is a big-hitting welterweight who brutally knocked out Holly Holm in their first encounter last December but lost a decision in their rematch in June. Mathis had not lost a fight in 17 years before that setback.

Cecilia Braekhus of Norway has won fights all over Europe. Image: AFP-Getty Images

CECILIA BRAEKHUS
COUNTRY: Norway
AGE: 30
HEIGHT: 5-8
RECORD: 20-0 (5 KOs)
SUMMARY: Braekhus won her second-to-last fight by 10th round knockout against the tough Kuulei Kupihea in Finland. Braekhus has fought all over Europe and has beaten some talented opponents. A mega fight with France's Mathis is currently scheduled for September.

KUULEI KUPIHEA
COUNTRY: U.S. (Honolulu)
AGE: 29
HEIGHT: N/A
RECORD: 7-2 (2 KOs)
SUMMARY: The southpaw lost her last fight to Cecilia Braekhus in Finland. She has only fought one opponent with a losing record and twice beaten undefeated boxers. Her only other loss came to very rugged world title challenger Erin Toughill.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

HANNA GABRIELS
COUNTRY: Costa Rica
AGE: 29
HEIGHT: 5-8
RECORD: 13-0-1 (9 KOs)
SUMMARY: Gabriels has exceptional natural talent. She is still learning but her pure athleticism and mental strength make her a dominating prizefighter. She recently defeated Dakota Stone in an impressive performance. Gabriels has fought four times outside of Costa Rica and is fearless.

MIKAELA LAUREN
COUNTRY: Sweden
AGE: 36
HEIGHT: N/A
RECORD: 16-2 (6 KOs)
SUMMARY: Lauren stopped Eva Halasi and outpointed tough Cindy Serrano. She is not afraid to fight the best and is willing to fight in other countries, such as Spain, United Arab Emirates, Dominican Republic and Germany. That shows a lot of confidence.

CHRISTY MARTIN
COUNTRY: U.S. (Orlando, Fla.)
AGE: 44
HEIGHT: 5-4
RECORD: 49-6-3 (31 KOs)
SUMMARY: Martin has more knockout wins than anyone else in women's boxing. She is also among an elite few with more than 50 pro fights. Martin has lost a lot of speed but uses her boxing knowledge to even the score inside the ring. She's scheduled to face Mia St. John in a rematch on Aug. 14.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

CHRISTINA HAMMER
COUNTRY: Germany
AGE: 21
HEIGHT: 5-11
RECORD: 12-0 (7 KOs)
SUMMARY: Hammer has fought some credible opponents. She is not afraid to fight in other countries and has wins in Czech Republic and Slovenia. The big puncher could be Germany's next superstar. Her biggest win came against fellow middleweight contender Maria Lindberg.

MARIA LINDBERG
COUNTRY: Sweden
AGE: 35
HEIGHT: 5-5
RECORD: 6-1-2 (1 KO)
SUMMARY: Lindberg is the consummate professional. She's a native Swede but has never fought in her homeland. Lindberg has engaged quality opponents all over the world, including the U.S. She recently lost a unanimous decision to Christina Hammer but showed toughness.

TORI NELSON
COUNTRY: U.S. (Ashburn, Va.)
AGE: 35
HEIGHT: N/A
RECORD: 6-0-1 (0 KOs)
SUMMARY: Nelson doesn't have many fights but has beaten some decent opponents, including Vashon Living. She has never fought anyone with a losing record and captured a world title in Trinidad and Tobago.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS, LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS AND HEAVYWEIGHTS

The heavier weight classes have very few female fighters so we've combined them in one category.

ZITA ZATYKO
COUNTRY: Hungary
AGE: 31
HEIGHT: 5-10
RECORD: 14-0-1 (10 KOs)
SUMMARY: Zatyko has faced solid competition in her own country and in Slovakia. She's a hard hitter who last fought in November, out-pointing Diana Kiss for a super middleweight title.

IJEOMA EGBUNINE
COUNTRY: Nigeria
AGE: 31
HEIGHT: 5-9
RECORD: 17-2 (10 KOs)
SUMMARY: Egbunine has fought some outstanding opponents and currently has a five-fight winning streak. She has beaten Veronica Rucker, Leatitia Robinson and Gwendolyn O'Neil. Her last fight was at heavyweight. She now lives in the U.S.

GWENDOLYN O'NEIL
COUNTRY: Guyana
AGE: 42
HEIGHT: 5-9
RECORD: 18-7-1 (7 KOs)
SUMMARY: O'Neil is a ring veteran of 13 years. She has some important victories, including wins over Laura Ramsay and Carlette Ewell. She has improved since losing by first-round knockout to Laila Ali in 2007.

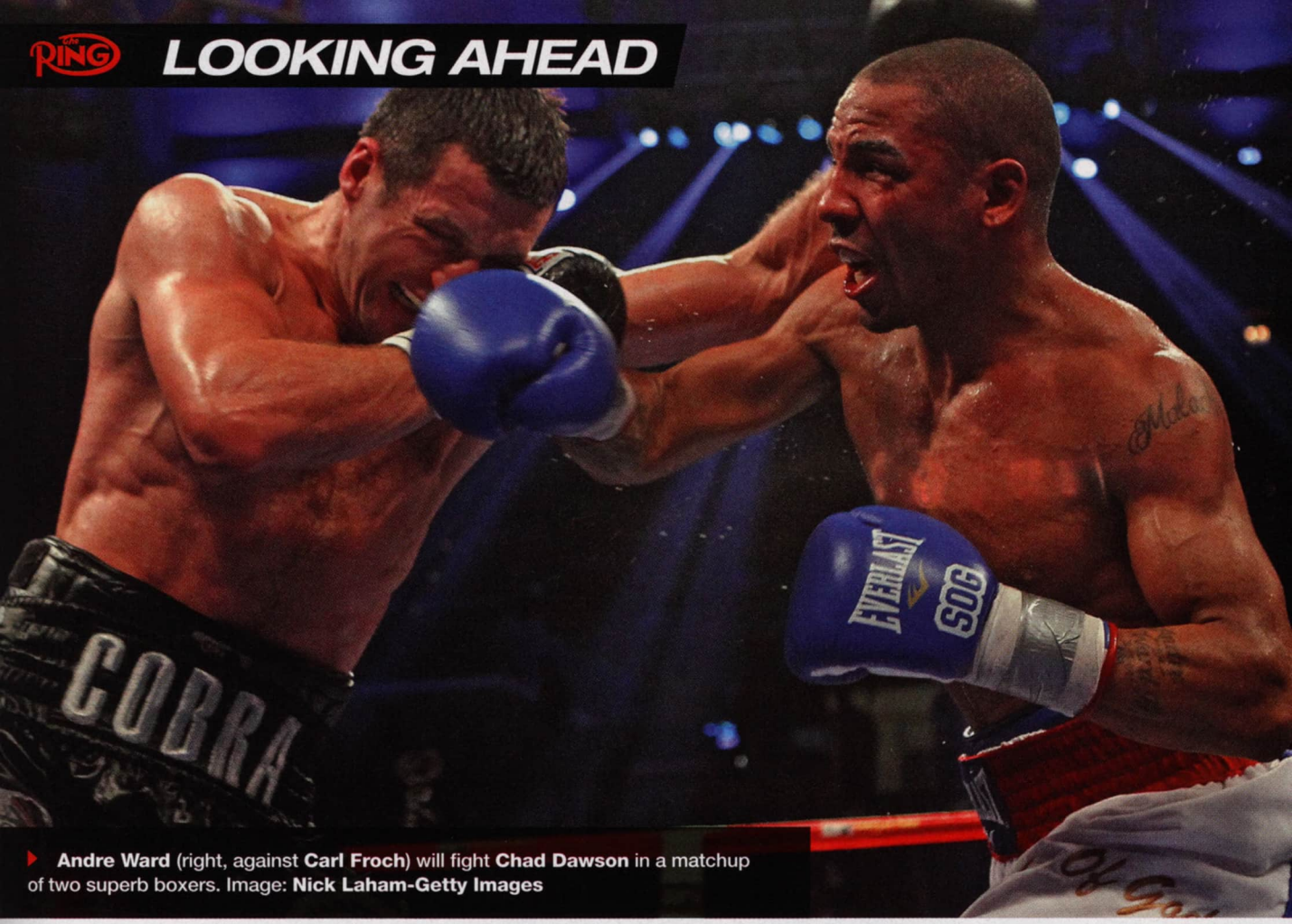
RESULTS
WBO, WBA and WBC welterweight titleholder Cecilia Braekhus (20-0, 5 KOs) of Norway beat challenger Jessica "The Hammer" Balogun (22-2, 10 KOs) of Germany by a unanimous 10-round decision on June 2 in Denmark.

WBA and WBO mini flyweight champion Yesica Bopp (20-0, 9 KOs) of Argentina retained her world titles by a unanimous decision against Anabel Ortiz (10-3, 2 KOs) of Mexico on May 24 in Buenos Aires.

In a major upset, Melissa McMorrow (7-3-3, 0 KOs) of San Francisco defeated WBO and WIBF flyweight titleholder and then-unbeaten Susi Kentikian (29-1, 16 KOs) of Germany by a majority decision May 16 in Frankfurt.

WBC flyweight world titleholder Mariana "Barbie" Juarez (34-5-3, 16 KOs) defeated former flyweight champion Arely Mucino (15-2-1, 8 KOs) by a split decision May 12 in Mexico City, then scored another decision over Japan's Shindo Go (10-2, 8 KOs) in California on July 14. The latter was Juarez's seventh consecutive title defense. ■

FOR PART I OF CREAM OF THE CROP, WHICH INCLUDES THE STRAWWEIGHT THROUGH JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHT DIVISIONS, GO HERE HTTP://GOO.GL/N8HTJ OR SCAN THIS QR CODE.



Andre Ward (right, against **Carl Froch**) will fight **Chad Dawson** in a matchup of two superb boxers. Image: **Nick Laham-Getty Images**

INTRIGUING OR BORING?

ANDRE WARD VS. CHAD DAWSON IS A CLASH OF GIFTED FIGHTERS BUT MIGHT PUT US TO SLEEP

By **Don Stradley**

Andre Ward and Chad Dawson are each coming off career highs. Ward was selected as THE RING's 2011 Fighter of The Year after winning the Showtime super middleweight tournament, highlighted by his dominating points victory over Carl Froch, while Dawson won the light heavyweight championship with a convincing 12-round decision over the old bandit of boxing, Bernard Hopkins. To their credit, Ward and Dawson aren't resting on their laurels. They will now fight each other on Sept. 8 at Oakland's Oracle Arena, with the bigger Dawson coming down in weight to challenge for Ward's WBA, WBC and RING belts.

You have the right to be intrigued. You also have the right to be bored. It's up to you.

On the intriguing side of things, the bout pits two of today's best young competitors against each other — Dawson (31-1, 17 knockouts) will be 30 by fight night, while Ward (25-0, 13 KOs) is 28.

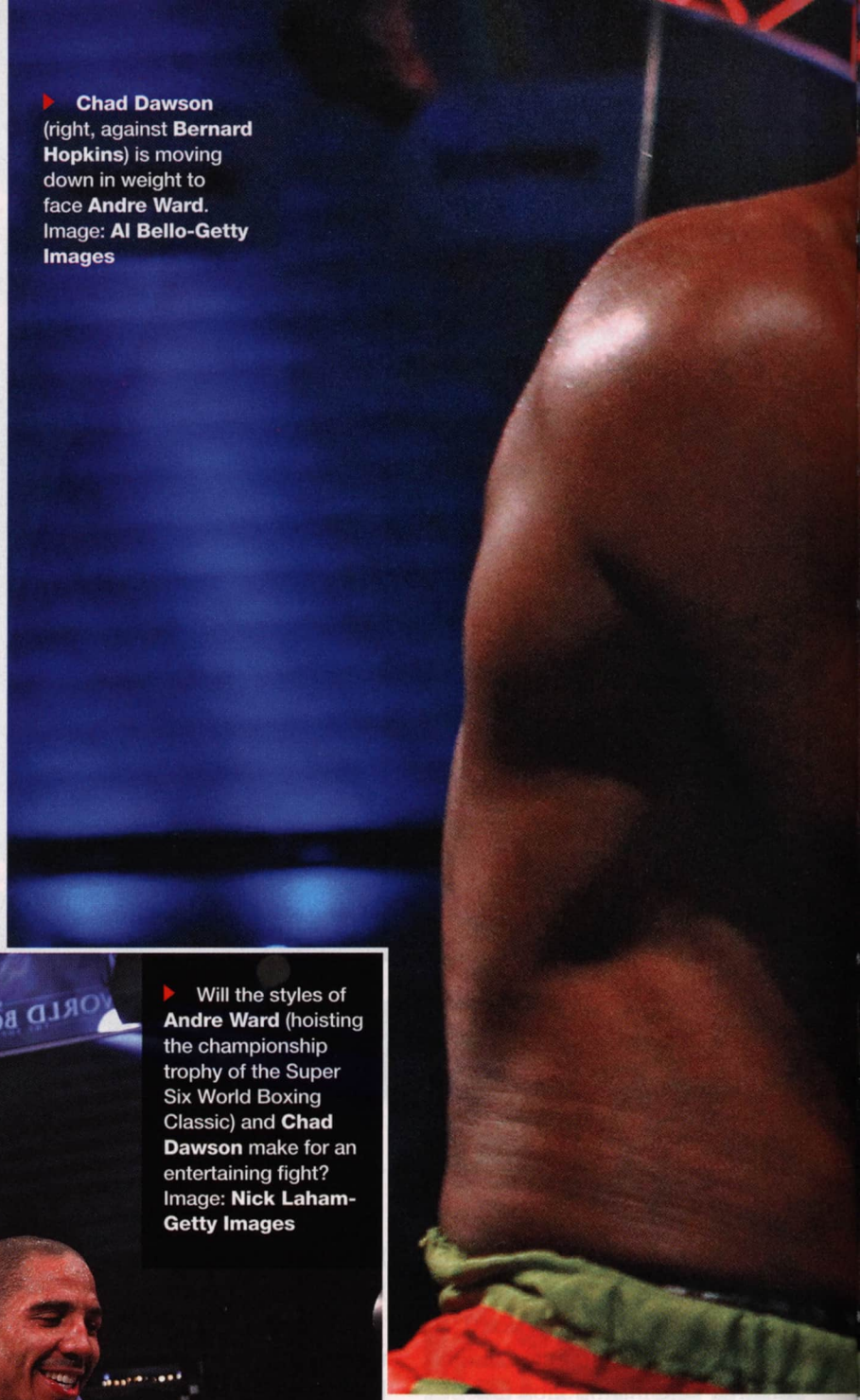
Stylistically, the fight should be fascinating for those who admire the subtleties of the sport. Ward is a crafty, intelligent fighter who wears opponents down with the steadiness of his attack. He also has an innate ability to tailor his style for each opponent. Dawson's main strength is his ability to control a fight. His long arms make him difficult to reach, he has quick hands and he uses his legs to create distance.

But if the thought of Ward and Dawson makes you sleepy, we understand.

Part of the problem is neither guy has much personality. Ward always looks as if he's running for class president — he has already started freelancing as a television commentator and has fully embraced the manicured drabness of that environment — while Dawson

is a grown man who mumbles a lot and dresses like Lil' Bow Wow. Can you imagine these two on HBO's 24/7? Ward will give us lots of religion and smiles, while Dawson will shrug a lot and call somebody a bitch. Not even the portentous tones of Liev Schreiber can disguise the fact that these two are a pair of walking clichés.

The most frustrating aspect of each fighter is that they have occasionally shown glimpses of greatness in the ring. Ward was a bulldozer against Froch, but for the most part he is a bland and methodical worker. Dawson, too, has looked impressive at times, particularly when he fought Glen Johnson hard in their first bout, but sometimes his handlers need an electric cattle prod to jolt some life into him. It's a rare Dawson bout that doesn't see him flake out midway, as if he's momentarily forgotten where he is.



Chad Dawson (right, against **Bernard Hopkins**) is moving down in weight to face **Andre Ward**. Image: **Al Bello-Getty Images**

Will the styles of **Andre Ward** (hoisting the championship trophy of the Super Six World Boxing Classic) and **Chad Dawson** make for an entertaining fight? Image: **Nick Laham-Getty Images**

So who will show up on Sept. 8? Two bright young RING champions wanting to make a case for themselves, or two dullards? If it's the aggressive Ward who ran roughshod over Allan Green and the Dawson who throws wicked combinations, we might see a very good fight. But if Ward resorts to a workmanlike fight plan and Dawson loses his focus, we're stuck with a long, tedious

contest. The latter would be unfortunate because HBO is investing in this bout, and both fighters could do with a memorable performance. A knockout finish isn't likely: Ward hasn't scored a KO since 2009; Dawson hasn't since 2007.

Dawson will probably win the early rounds with his excellent jab and ring generalship. By Rounds 5 and 6, as Dawson goes through his usual midpoint fade, Ward will start closing the gap and getting his work done on the inside. Dawson might show the effects of coming in at the 168-pound limit, a full six or seven pounds under his usual fighting weight. For this reason, a long distance fight favors Ward. Sensing the bout is getting away from him, Dawson will put up a good effort in the final frames, but coming down in weight may take something off Dawson's punches. Ward, encouraged by his hometown Oakland fans, will finish stronger, pinning Dawson along the ropes and chipping away, putting the occasional head-butt in for good measure.

It looks like Ward by a close decision. It might even be a good fight. But drink some strong coffee beforehand, just in case. ■

1.

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1. Leroy Nicholas with Barry McGuigan at the Kell Brook-Matthew Hatton fight in Sheffield, England. **2.** Eliezer Serrano with Lennox Lewis at the Andre Berto-Juan Urango fight in Hollywood, Fla. **3.** Juan Casillas with Andre Ward outside Kings Boxing Gym in Oakland, Calif. **4.** Joseph Budrow with Gary Russell Jr. at a USA Boxing amateur event at Sugar Ray Leonard Boxing Gym in Landover, Md. Budrow, 12, had just won his second fight in the 95-pound division. **5.** Iztaccihuatl Soto getting her belly signed by Jesse James Leija at the International Boxing Hall of Fame induction weekend in Canastota, N.Y.

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Send us your photos from a fight with you posing next to a celebrity, athlete, or other famous person and we will consider it for publication in the magazine. Send photos to **celebrityphotos@sepublications.com.** Make sure to include your name(s), celebrity name(s), the fight attended, and your contact information. See you at the fights!

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